

# The Pilgrim Way Commentary on Philipians



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**Apology for This Work**

This commentary on Philippians follows in a long line of other works by divines of the past as they have sought to study and expound this very important epistle.

This work grew out of over 35 years of both preaching through Philippians in three pastorates in Maryland, Delaware and North Carolina as well as teaching through the epistle as an instructor at Maryland Baptist Bible College in Elkton, Maryland. I needed my own notes and outlines as I taught and preached from this book, so this fuller commentary flows from those notes and outlines. Thus, the layout of this commentary is a practical one, written by a preacher to be preached from in the pulpit or to be taught in a Sunday School. It was not written from an isolated study of a theologian who had little contact with people or practical ministerial experience. There are many such commentaries on the market and they tend to be someone dull and not very practical in their application.

This commentary cannot be easily classified into any single theological system. I believe that no single theological system is an accurate presentation of Scriptural truth in and of itself. When Charles Spurgeon once wrote "There is no such thing as preaching Christ and Him crucified, unless we preach what nowadays is called Calvinism. It is a nickname to call it Calvinism; Calvinism is the gospel, and nothing else", he displayed a most unfortunate theological hubris. Calvinism is a human, flawed, limited and uninspired theological system, as any other human theological system. There is some truth there, as there is in any theological system, but it ranks no better than other competing systems, such as Arminianism (which is nothing more than a modified version of Calvin's teachings), dispensationalism, covenant theology, Lutheranism, Romanism, Orthodox theology, pre-wrath rapture, take your pick. All these systems are flawed as they are all the products of human attempts to understand and systematize Biblical presentations. They can all make contributions to our overall understandings of the truth but none may claim to be the only correct such presentation, at the expense of all others. Knowing the human impossibility for absolute neutrality and the human love for theological systems, I readily admit that I cannot be as dispassionate and uninfluenced by human teachings in these pages as I would like. No man can be. But I have made every attempt not to allow my own personal systems influence my understanding of what the clear teachings of Scripture is.

I have freely consulted a wide variety of commentaries and sermons for insights and other views of various texts that I might have missed. As the old preacher once remarked "I milked a lot of cows but I churned my own butter." Direct quotes are attributed to their proper source to prevent that unpardonable sin of literary theft. But simply because I quoted a writer should not be viewed as an endorsement of all that he wrote or of his theological system. I selected the quote because I found it interesting and useful, not because I am in any degree of agreement regarding the rest of his teachings.

This commentary is based on the text of our English Received Version, commonly referred to as the King James Version or the Authorized Version. I believe that this is the most preserved English translation available to us and that it is the superior translation in English. I can see no good reason to use or accept any of the modern versions, especially the current "flavor of the month" of the apostate professing church, the corrupt and mis-named English Standard Version. When it comes to these modern, critical text versions, I reject them for a variety of reasons. One major reason is that they have not been proven on the field of battle. I have liver spots older than the English Standard Version, but I am expected to toss my English Received Text, over 400 years old, and take up this new translation, whose ink is still barely

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dry? How many battles has the ESV won? How many missionaries have done great exploits with an NIV? What revivals have been birth and nurtured with an NASB? We will stick with the translations and texts that our fathers used and that God has blessed. We are also favorably inclined to the Geneva Bible, Tyndale Bible, Matthews Bible, and other “cousins” of our English text. The Greek text used is the underlying text of our English Received Text and its 1769 revision, which is the text most widely in use today by God’s remnant.

Each verse is commented upon, with the English text, with verb tenses and parts of speech (for the Greek text). The English grammatical notes are limited to the tenses of the corresponding Greek verbs, for I believe the study of the verb tenses is the most important element of the usage of the Greek text, even more so than word studies. Not every Greek word is commented upon, only unusual or important ones. I am guilty of “picking and choosing” my word studies instead of presenting complete word studies for every word. That system would simply be too unwieldy for my purposes.

The presupposition of this commentary is that what the Bible says is so and that we will not change the text to suit our theological fancy. It says what it says and that is what we must accept, else we will be found unfaithful stewards of the Word of God, a judgment we fear. We will not amend our text but will take it as it is the best we can.

This commentary certainly is not perfect, nor is it the final presentation of my understanding and application of the book of Philippians. A commentary over 35 years in the making can never truly said to be finished. As new insights are granted by the Holy Spirit and as my understanding of the epistle deepens, additional material will be added, and sections will have to be re-written. One is never truly “finished” with any theological book. As one deepens and grows in his relationship with the Lord, so does his theological understandings and that should be reflected in one’s writings.

This book was also written as a theological legacy to my four children. They will need to be mighty for God in their generation for their days will certainly be darker than the generation their father grew up in. This book is an expression not only of the heart of a preacher in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century but also of a Christian father for his children, so they may more fully understand what their father believed and preached during his ministry.

It is my sincere prayer that this unpretentious contribution to the body of Christian commentary literature will be a blessing to the remnant of God’s saints in the earth as we approach the coming of our Lord.

## **Introduction to Philippians**

### **Authorship**

There is no doubt that Paul is the author. Even most of the most extreme modernists and liberals are forced to admit such. Clement of Rome, Polycarp, Ignatius, Irenaeus, Clemet of Alexandria and Tertullian also testify to Pauline authorship.

Naturally, the modernists and liberals try their best to sow as much confusion and uncertainty as possible. The usual critical attacks include:

1. The mention of "bishops and deacons" (1:1) points to a post -Pauline stage of church government
2. The epistle shows no originality. It is full of imitations of Paul's genuine epistles
3. The epistle shows traces of Gnosticism in 2:5-8
4. Philippians is a post-Pauline attempt to reconcile the Jewish -Christian and Gentile-Christian parties

These attacks are no longer taken seriously by orthodox and Bible believing students.

### **Background**

Paul was on his second missionary journey in the year 52 A.D. He felt that he was strangely thwarted in many of his plans. He had had a most distressing illness in Galatia. The Spirit would not permit him to preach in Asia, and when he essayed to enter Bithynia the Spirit again would not suffer it. Baffled and perplexed, the apostle with his two companions, Silas and Timothy, went on to the seacoast and stopped in Troas. Here at last his leading became clear. A vision of a man from Macedonia convinced him that it was the will of God that he should preach in the western continent of Europe. The way was opened at once. The winds were favorable. In two days, he came to Neapolis. At once he took the broad paved way of the Via Egnatia up to the mountain pass and down on the other side to Philippi, a journey of some 8 miles. There was no synagogue at Philippi, but a little company of Jews gathered for Sabbath worship at "a place of prayer", about a mile to the West of the city gate on the shore of the river Gangites. Paul and his companions talked to the women gathered there, and Lydia was converted. Later, a maid with the spirit of divination was exorcised. Paul and Silas were scourged and thrown into prison, an earthquake set them free, the jailer became a believer, the magistrates repented their treatment of men who were Roman citizens and besought them to leave the city (Acts 16:6-40). Paul had had his first experience of a Roman scourging and of lying in the stocks of a Roman prison here at Philippi, yet he went on his way rejoicing, for a company of disciples had been formed, and he had won the devotion of loyal and loving hearts for himself and his Master. That was worth all the persecution and the pain. The Christians at Philippi seem to have been Paul's favorites among all his converts. He never lost any opportunity of visiting them and refreshing his spirit with their presence in the after-years. Six years later he was resident in Ephesus and having sent Titus to Corinth with a letter to the Corinthians and being in doubt as to the spirit in which it would be received, he appointed a meeting with Titus in Macedonia, and probably spent the anxious days of his waiting at Philippi. If he met Titus there, he may have written 2 Corinthians in that city (2 Corinthians 2:13; 7:6). Paul returned to Ephesus, and after the riot in that city he went over again into Macedonia and made his third visit to Philippi. He probably promised the Philippians at this time that he would return to Philippi to celebrate the Easter week with his beloved converts there. He went on into Greece, but in 3 months he was back again, at the festival of the resurrection in the year 58 AD (Acts 20:2,6). We read in 1 Timothy 1:3 that Paul visited Macedonia after the Roman imprisonment. He enjoyed himself among the Philippians. They were Christians after his own heart. He thanks God for their fellowship from the first day until now (Philippians 1:5) He declares that they are his beloved who have always obeyed, not in his presence only, but much more in his absence (Philippians 2:12). With fond repetition he addresses them as his brethren,

beloved and longed for, his joy and crown, his beloved (Philippians 4:1). This was Paul's favorite church, and we can gather from the epistle good reason for this fact. (*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*)

"When Paul chose a place wherein to preach the gospel, he always did so with the eye of a strategist. He always chose one which was not only important in itself but was also the key point of a whole area. To this day many of Paul's preaching-centers are still great road centers and railway junctions. Such was Philippi which had at least three great claims to distinction.

(i) In the neighborhood there were gold and silver mines, which had been worked as far back as the time of the Phoenicians. It is true that by the time of the Christian era they had become exhausted, but they had made Philippi a great commercial center of the ancient world.

(ii) The city had been founded by Philip, father of Alexander the Great, and it is his name that it bears. It was founded on the site of an ancient city called Krenides, a name which means The Wells or Fountains. Philip had founded Philippi in 368 B.C. because there was no more strategic site in all Europe. There is a range of hills which divides Europe from Asia, east from west and just at Philippi that chain of hills dips into a pass so that the city commanded the road from Europe to Asia, since the road must go through the pass. This was the reason that one of the great battles of history was fought at Philippi; for it was here that Antony defeated Brutus and Cassius, and thereby decided the future of the Roman Empire.

(iii) Not very long after, Philippi attained the dignity of a Roman Colony. The Roman Colonies were amazing institutions. They were not colonies in the sense of being outposts of civilization in unexplored parts of the world. They had begun by having a military significance. It was the custom of Rome to send out parties of veteran soldiers, who had served their time and been granted citizenship, to settle in strategic road centers. Usually these parties consisted of three hundred veterans with their wives and children. These colonies were the focal points of the great Roman road systems which were so engineered that reinforcements could speedily be sent from one colony to another. They were founded to keep the peace and to command the strategic centers in Rome's far-flung Empire. At first they had been founded in Italy; but soon they were scattered throughout the whole Empire, as the Empire grew. In later days the title of colony was given by the government to any city which it wished to honor for faithful service.

Wherever they were, these colonies were little fragments of Rome and their pride in their Roman citizenship was their dominating characteristic. The Roman language was spoken; Roman dress was worn; Roman customs were observed; their magistrates had Roman titles and carried out the same ceremonies as were carried out in Rome itself. They were stubbornly and unalterably Roman and would never have dreamt of becoming assimilated to the people amidst whom they were set. We can hear the Roman pride breathing through the charge against Paul and Silas in Ac.16:20-21: "These men are Jews, and they are trying to teach and to introduce laws and customs which it is not right for us to observe--for we are Romans." (William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible, Philippians, Colossians and Thessalonians*, pages 3-4)."

### **The Church at Philippi.**

It seems to be the least Jewish of all the Pauline churches. There were few Jews in Philippi. No Hebrew names are found in the list of converts in this church mentioned in the New Testament. The Jewish opponents of Paul seem never to have established themselves in this community.

Women seem to be unusually prominent in the history of this church, and this is consistent with what we know concerning the position accorded to woman in Macedonian society. Lydia brings her whole family with her into the church. She must have been a very influential woman, and her own fervor and devotion and generosity and hospitality seem to have been contagious and to have become characteristic of the whole Christian community. Euodia and Syntyche are mentioned in the epistle, two women who were fellow-laborers with Paul in

the gospel, for both of whom he has great respect, of both of whom he is sure that their names are written in the book of life, but who seem to have differed with each other in some matter of opinion. Paul exhorts them to be of the same mind in the Lord (Philippians 4:2). The prominence of women in the congregation at Philippi or the dominance of Lydia's influence among them may account for the fact that they seem to have been more mindful of Paul's comfort than any of his other converts were. They raised money for Paul's support and forwarded it to him again and again. They were anxious that he should have all that was needful. They were willing to give of their time and their means to that end. There seem to have been no theological differences in their company. That may testify to the fact that the most of them were women.

There were splendid men in the church membership too. Some of them were Macedonians and some of them were Roman veterans.

Paul rejoiced in them. They were spirits congenial with his own. The Roman veterans had been trained in the Roman wars to hardness and discipline and loyalty. They were Roman citizens and proud of the fact. In the epistle Paul exhorts them to behave as citizens worthy of the gospel of Christ (Philippians 1:27), and he reminds them that though they were proud of their Roman citizenship, as was he, they all had become members of a heavenly commonwealth, citizenship in which was a much greater boon than even the *jus Italicum* had been. In 3:20 Paul states the fact again, "Our citizenship is in heaven"; and he goes on to remind them that their King is seated there upon the throne and that He is coming again to establish a glorious empire, for He has power to subject all things unto Himself.

It is to these old soldiers and athletes that Paul addresses his military and gymnastic figures of speech. He informs them that the whole Praetorian Guard had heard of the gospel through his imprisonment at Rome (1:13). He sends them greeting from the saints that are in Caesar's household (4:22). He prays that he may hear of them that they stand fast like an immovable phalanx, with one soul striving athletically for the faith of the gospel (1:27). He knows that they will be fearless and brave, in nothing affrighted by the adversaries (1:28). He speaks of his own experience as a wrestling-match, a conflict or contest (1:30). He joys in the sacrifice and service of their faith (2:17). He calls Epaphroditus not only his fellow-worker but his fellow-soldier (2:25). He likens the Christian life to a race in which he presses on toward the goal unto the prize (3:14). He asks the Philippians to keep even, soldierly step with him in the Christian walk (3:16). These metaphors have their appeal to an athletic and military race, and they bear their testimony to the high regard which Paul had for this type of Christianity and for those in whose lives it was displayed. We do not know the names of many of these men, for only Clement and Epaphroditus are mentioned here; but we gather much concerning their spirit from this epistle, and we are as sure as Paul himself that their names are all written in the book of life (4:3).

Surely these are unusual encomiums. The Philippians must have been a very unusual people. If the depth of one's consecration and the reality of one's religion are to be measured by the extent to which they affect the disposition of one's material possessions, if one measure of Christian love is to be found in Christian giving, then the Philippians may well stand supreme among the saints in the Pauline churches. Paul seems to have loved them most. He loved them enough to allow them to contribute toward his support. Elsewhere he refused any help of this sort, and steadfastly adhered to his plan of self-support while he was preaching the gospel. He made the single exception in the case of the Philippians. He must have been sure of their affection and of their confidence. Four times they gave Paul pecuniary aid. Twice they sent him their contributions just after he had left them and gone on to Thessalonica (4:15,16) When Paul had proceeded to Corinth and was in want during his ministry there his heart was gladdened by the visitation of brethren from Philippi, who supplied the measure of his want (2 Corinthians 11:8,9). It was not a first enthusiasm, forgotten as soon as the engaging personality of the apostle was removed from their sight. It was not merely a personal attachment that prompted

their gifts. They gave to their own dear apostle, but only that he might minister to others as he had ministered to them. He was their living link with the work in the mission field.

Eleven years passed by, and the Philippians heard that Paul was in prison at Rome and again in need of their help. Eleven years are enough to make quite radical changes in a church membership, but there seems to have been no change in the loyalty or the liberality of the Philippian church in that time. The Philippians hastened to send Epaphroditus to Rome with their contributions and their greetings. It was like a bouquet of fresh flowers in the prison cell. Paul writes this epistle to thank them that their thought for him had blossomed afresh at the first opportunity they had had (4:10). No wonder that Paul loved them and was proud of them and made their earnestness and sincerity and affection the standard of comparison with the love of others (2 Corinthians 8:8). (*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*).

### **Genuineness of the Epistle.**

The genuineness of the epistle is very generally admitted today. It was in the Canon of Marcion. Its name occurs in the list on the Muratorian Fragment. It is found in both the Peshitta and the Old Latin versions. It is mentioned by Polycarp and quoted in the letter of the churches of Lyons and Vienne, in the Epistle of Diognetus, and in the writings of Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria. Baur made a determined attack upon its authenticity. He declared that it was not doctrinal and polemical like the other Pauline Epistles, but that it was full of shallow imitations of these. He said it had no apparent motive and no connected argument and no depth of thought. He questioned some of the historical data and suspected Gnostic influence in certain passages. Bleek said of Baur's arguments that they were partly derived from a perverted interpretation of certain passages in the epistle; they partly rested upon arbitrary historical presuppositions; and some of them were really so weak that it was hard to believe that he could have attached any importance to them himself. It is not surprising that few critics have been found willing to follow Baur's leadership at this point. Biederman, Kneucker, Hinsch, Hitzig, Hoekstra, and Holsten may be mentioned among them. The genuineness of the epistle has been defended by Weizsacker, Weiss, Pfeleiderer, Julicher, Kloppner, Schenkel, Reuss, Hilgenfeld, Harnack, Holtzmann, Mangold, Lipsius, Renan, Godet, Zahn, Davidson, Lightfoot, Farrar, McGiffert, and practically all of the English writers on the subject. Weizsacker says that the reasons for attributing the epistle to the apostle Paul are "overwhelming." McGiffert declares: "It is simply inconceivable that anyone else would or could have produced in his name a letter in which no doctrinal or ecclesiastical motive can be discovered, and in which the personal element so largely predominates and the character of the man and the apostle is revealed with so great vividness and fidelity. The epistle deserves to rank alongside of Galatians, Corinthians, and Romans as an undoubted product of Paul's pen, and as a coordinate standard by which to test the genuineness of other and less certain writings" (*The Apostolic Age*, page 393). This is the practically unanimous conclusion of modern scholarship. (*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*).

### **Place**

This is one of the prison epistles, so it was written from Rome. Paul makes frequent reference to his bonds (1:7,13,14,17).

### **Date of Writing.**

The date of writing is probably around 61-63.

### **Occasion for Writing**

This church had sent Paul a gift by the hand of Epaphroditus, so Paul wrote to acknowledge the gift and to thank the church for it. Epaphroditus also brought news. There was a potential



problem brewing with the trouble between Syntyche and Euodia. A potential split may have been brewing and Paul wrote to defuse it

### **Paul's Work at Philippi**

Paul founded the church at Philippi, Acts 16:12-40, on his second missionary trip. There was no synagogue which is why Paul started his ministry along the riverside where some Jews gathered for prayer. Tradition says it took ten men to start a synagogue, so the Jewish population must have been very small. As a Roman military town, Philippi was very Roman, very Gentile and not Jewish at all. Paul and Silas were thrown in jail as a result of their public ministry. At midnight, bound and beaten, they sang a hymn and praised God (Acts 16:25). The Church at Philippi would be the first recorded Christian congregation on European soil (Acts 16:11-40). A lifelong supportive relationship developed between the Philippians and Paul (1:5; 4:15). He visited the church again during his third missionary journey (Acts 20:1,6).

At the time he wrote Philippians, Paul was in prison at Rome (1:7). The Philippians came to Paul's aid by sending a gift, perhaps of money, through Epaphroditus (4:18). During his stay with Paul, Epaphroditus fell desperately ill due to overwork. But he recovered, and Paul sent him back to Philippi. He sent this letter with him to relieve the anxiety of the Philippians over their beloved fellow-worker (2:25-30). The church itself was poor and had much trial and affliction, yet they ministered out of their deep poverty to other needy saints (2 Corinthians 8:1, 2; Philippians 1:28-30).

### **The City of Philippi**

The Philippi of Paul's day was situated in a plain, on the banks of a deep and rapid stream called Gangites (now Angista). The ancient walls followed the course of the stream for some distance; and in this section of the wall the site of a gate is seen, with the ruins of a bridge nearly opposite. In the narrative of Paul's visit it is said: "On the Sabbath we went out of the gate by the river where a meeting for prayer was accustomed to be". It was doubtless by this gate they went out, and by the side of this river the prayer-meeting was held. As Philippi was a military colony, it is probable that the Jews had no synagogue, and were not permitted to hold their worship within the walls. Behind the city, on the north-east, rose lofty mountains; but on the opposite side a vast and rich plain stretched out, reaching on the south-west to the sea, and on the north-west far away among the ranges of Macedonia. On the south-east a rocky ridge, some sixteen hundred feet in height, separated the plain from the bay and town of Neapolis. Over it ran a paved road connecting Philippi with Neapolis. Though the distance between the two was nine miles, yet Neapolis was to Philippi what the Piraeus was to Athens; and hence Paul is said, when journeying from Greece to Syria, to have "sailed away from Philippi;" that is, from Neapolis, its port (Acts 20:6).

Philippi was in the province of Macedonia, while Neapolis was in Thrace. Paul, on his first journey, landed at the latter, and proceeded across the mountain road to the former, which Luke calls "the first city of the division of Macedonia" (Acts 16:12). Thessalonica was the chief city of all Macedonia, and Amphipolis of that division of it in which Philippi was situated. In descending the mountain-path towards Philippi the apostle had before him a vast and beautiful panorama. The whole plain, with its green meadows, and clumps of trees, and wide reaches of marsh, and winding streams, lay at his feet; and away beyond it the dark ridges of Macedonia. The missionary visit of Paul and Silas to Philippi was successful. They found an eager audience in the few Jews and proselytes who frequented the prayer place on the banks of the Gangites. Lydia, a trader from Thyatira, was the first convert. Her whole house followed her example. It was when going and returning from Lydia's house that "the damsel possessed with a spirit of divination" met the apostles. Paul cast out the spirit, and then those who had made a trade of the poor girl's misfortune rose against them, and took them before the magistrates, who, with all

the haste and roughness of martial law, ordered them to be scourged and thrown into prison. Even this gross act of injustice redounded in the end to the glory of God: for the jailer and his whole house were converted, and the very magistrates were compelled to make a public apology to the apostles, and to set them at liberty, thus declaring their innocence.

Paul visited Philippi twice more, once immediately after the disturbances which arose at Ephesus out of the jealousy of the manufacturers of silver shrines for Artemis. By this time the hostile relation in which the Christian doctrine necessarily stood to all purely ceremonial religions was perfectly manifest; and wherever its teachers appeared, popular tumults were to be expected, and the jealousy of the Roman authorities, who dreaded civil disorder above everything else, to be feared. It seems not unlikely that the second visit of the apostle to Philippi was made specially with the view of counteracting this particular danger. He appears to have remained in the city and surrounding country a considerable time (Acts 20:1, 2).

When Paul passed through Philippi a third time he does not appear to have made any considerable stay there (verse 6). He and his companion are somewhat loosely spoken of as sailing from Philippi; but this is because in the common apprehension of travelers the city and its port were regarded as one. On this occasion the voyage to Troas took the apostle five days, the vessel being probably obliged to coast in order to avoid the contrary wind, until coming off the headland of Sarpedon, whence she would be able to stand across to Troas with an E. or E.N.E. breeze, which at that time of year (after Easter) might be looked for.

The Christian community at Philippi distinguished itself in liberality. On the apostle's first visit he was hospitably entertained by Lydia, and when he afterwards went to Thessalonica, where his reception appears to have been of a very mixed character, the Philippians sent him supplies more than once, and were the only Christian community that did so (Philippians 4:15). They also contributed readily to the collection made for the relief of the poor at Jerusalem, which Paul conveyed to them at his last visit (2 Corinthians 8:1-6). It would seem as if they sent further supplies to the apostle after his arrival at Rome. The necessity for these appears to have been urgent, and some delay to have taken place in collecting the requisite funds; so that Epaphroditus, who carried them, risked his life in the endeavor to make up for lost time (Philippians 2:30). The delay, however, seems to have somewhat stung the apostle at the time, who fancied his beloved flock had forgotten him (see 4:10-17). Epaphroditus fell ill with fever from his efforts, and nearly died. On recovering he became homesick, and wandering in mind from the weakness which is the sequel of fever; and Paul although intending soon to send Timothy to the Philippian Church, thought it desirable to let Epaphroditus go without delay to them, who had already heard of his sickness, and carry with him the letter which is included in the canon — one which was written after the apostle's imprisonment at Rome had lasted a considerable time. Some domestic troubles connected with religion had already broken out in the community. Euodias and Syntyche are exhorted to agree with one another in the matter of their common faith; and the former is implored to extend his sympathy to certain females (obviously familiar both to Paul and to him) who did good service to the apostle in his trials at Philippi, and who in some way or other appear to be the occasion of the disagreement between the pair.

It would seem, as Alford says, that the cruel treatment of the apostle at Philippi had combined with the charm of his personal fervor of affection to knit up a bond of more than ordinary love between him and the Philippian Church. They alone, of all churches, sent subsidies to relieve his temporal necessities" (Philippians 4:10, 15, 18; 2 Corinthians 11:9; 1 Thessalonians 2:2). The apostle felt their kindness; and during his imprisonment at Rome wrote to them that epistle which is still in our canon. This epistle indicates that at that time some of the Christians there were in the custody of the military authorities as seditious persons, through some proceedings or other connected with their faith (Philippians 1:29).

The Jewish formalists in Philippi were the parties most likely to misrepresent the conduct of the new converts; and hence the apostle reverts to cautions against them, such precisely as

he had given before, consequently by word of mouth: "Beware of those dogs" (3:2,3). (John McClintock and James Strong, *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*)."

**Names and Titles of Christ**

- |                                |                                  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Jesus Christ 1:1            | 8. God's Highly Exalted One 2:9a |
| 2. Christ Jesus 1:1; 3:3       | 9. A name above every name 2:9b  |
| 3. Lord Jesus Christ 1:2; 4:23 | 10. Jesus 2:10                   |
| 4. Christ 1:10                 | 11. Lord 2:11; 3:8               |
| 5. God 2:6                     | 12. Lord Jesus 2:19              |
| 6. Servant 2:7                 | 13. Savior 3:20                  |
| 7. Son of Man 2:7              |                                  |

**Names and Titles of God**

- |                     |                                |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Father 1:2; 2:11 | 3. Supplier of every need 4:19 |
| 2. God of Peace 4:9 |                                |

**Names and Titles of the Holy Spirit**

- |                                |                   |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Spirit of Jesus Christ 1:19 | 2. The Spirit 2:1 |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|

There are no direct Old Testament references in Philippians.

**Outlines**

From Robert Boyd, *World's Bible Handbook*, page 569:

1. Christ- The Believer's Life- rejoicing in suffering 1:8-30
2. Christ- The Believer's Ideal- rejoicing in lowly service 2
3. Christ- The believer's Object- rejoicing despite imperfections 3
4. Christ- the Believer's Power- rejoicing in circumstances 4:1-19

From *The Companion Bible*, page 1773:

- A. 1:1,2 Epistolary and Salutation, Grace to Them
  - B. 1:3-26 Paul's Solicitude for the Philippians
    - C. 1:27-2:18 Exhortation and Example of Christ
      - D. 2:19-24 The Example of Timothy
      - D. 2:25-30 The Example of Epaphroditus
    - C. 3:1-4,9 Exhortation and Example of Paul
  - B. 4:10-20 The Philippians Solicitude for Paul
- A. 4:21-23 Epistolary and Doxology, Grace to Them

J. Sidlow Baxter, *Explore the Book*, 6:186:

- Philippians 1- Christ Our Life
- Philippians 2- Christ Our Mind
- Philippians 3- Christ Our Goal
- Philippians 4- Christ our Strength

From W. Graham Scroggie, *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption*, 3:207

Philippians 1:1-26	Philippians 1:27-2:30	Philippians 3:1-4:1	Philippians 4:2-23
The Joyful Repose of the Christian Life	The Lofty Ideal of the Christian Life	The Devout Energy of the Christian Life	The Grand Uniqueness of the Christian Life
Introduction 1:1,2	1. The Standard	1. Christianity is	1. Its Steadfastness

## Pilgrim Way Commentary on Philippians

	Appointed 1:27-2:16	Opposed to Judaism 3:1-16	4:2-7
1. Response to the Promise of the Past 1:3-11	2. The Standard Approached 2:17-30	2. Christianity is Opposed to Antinomianism 3:17-4:1	2. Its Spirituality 4:8,9
2. Repose in the Purpose of the Present 1:12-18			3. Its Sufficiency 4:10-20
3. Repose in the Plan of the Future 1:19-26			Conclusion 4:21-23

### **Outline of Philippians**

1. Introduction 1:1,2
2. Paul's Thanksgiving for the Philippians 1:3-8
3. Paul's Prayer List for the Philippians 1:9-11
4. Paul's Afflictions Promote the Gospel 1:12-18
5. Paul's Afflictions Exalt the Lord 1:19-22
6. Paul's Two Desires 1:23-26
7. Paul's Exhortation to the Philippians 1:27-30
8. Exhortation to Humility 2:1-4
9. The Kenosis, or the Self-Humiliation of Christ 2:5-8
10. The Exaltation of Christ 2:9-11
11. Work Out Your Own Salvation 2:12-16
12. Paul's Willingness to Be Sacrificed for the Philippians 2:17,18
13. Commendation of Timothy 2:19-24
14. Commendation of Epaphroditus 2:25-30
15. Beware of the Flesh 3:1-3
16. Paul's Autobiography 3:4-6
17. Paul's Personal Desire 3:7-11
18. Apprehending and Pressing Forward 3:12-16
19. Be Followers of Me 3:17-20
20. The Glorified Body 3:21
21. Exhortation to Euodias and Syntyche 4:1-3
22. Rejoice in the Lord 4:4
23. Let Your Moderation be Known 4:5
24. An Exhortation to Prayer 4:6
25. The Peace of God 4:7
26. Think on These Things 4:8,9
27. The State of Contentment 4:10-13
28. The Generosity of the Philippians 4:14-19
29. Conclusion 4:20-23

### **Other Remarks**

1. Philippians does not speak of Christ in a doctrinal way but in a devotional one in describing the walk and life of one who has apprehended Christ.
2. The word "sin" and "sins" do not occur in Philippians, as the believer's old man has been crucified with Christ.

## Pilgrim Way Commentary on Philippians

3. The words “joy” and “rejoicing” are used 18 times in Philippians, showing the heart of the Christian life.

4. A denomination's "First Church" in any town or city has special prestige in the eyes of its adherents. Imagine, then, the importance of the first known church—before there were any denominations—not merely in a single town, but in all of Europe! Such was the congregation at Philippi, in ancient Macedonia (northern Greece). How Christians in the West should rejoice (and even non-Christians, if they knew of the blessed by-products of Christianity they enjoy) that Paul heeded "the Macedonian call" and turned west, not east, in his evangelization of the Roman Empire! Perhaps the continent of Asia would today be sending Christian missionaries to Europe and North America instead of vice versa, had not the gospel taken hold in Europe. (William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary*).

5. “For many of us Philippians is the loveliest letter Paul ever wrote. It has been called by two titles. It has been called The Epistle of excellent Things--and so indeed it is; and it has been called The Epistle of Joy (William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible, Philippians, Colossians and Thessalonians*, page 8).”

6. “Philippians is put in our Bibles between Ephesians and Colossians. Philippians speaks of Christ but not in a doctrinal way. It is an epistle which describes the walk and the life of one who has apprehended his position in Christ and walks therefore in the power of the Spirit of God. It shows what manner of lives those should live on earth who are saved by grace and who are waiting for glory.

A. The epistle assumes the knowledge of what the salvation of God is. We therefore find nothing said about justification, peace with God, or assurance of salvation.

B. Philippians shows us what true Christian experience is in the power of the Spirit of God.

C. The words sins and sin are not found in this epistle. The true believer knows that his sins are put away and that the old man is crucified with Christ. The question of deliverance from the guilt of sin and from the power of sin, as so blessedly revealed in Romans, does not enter into true Christian experience.

D. True Christian experience is to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit and to manifest Christ in that walk. This Epistle to the Philippians reveals from beginning to end the Christian walk.

E. The name of our Lord is used over fifty times in the four chapters. He is the believer's life.

F. The words joy, and rejoicing are used eighteen times in Philippians. It is the epistle of rejoicing. The whole atmosphere of this epistle is that of joy, and so the believer, in whatever earthly circumstances he may be placed, should manifest the joy of the Lord. Paul is now in prison in Rome, as years before he was in the Philippian jail; he now sends forth from the Roman prison the triumphant song of faith and holy joy. There is not a word of murmur or complaint.

G. He had Christ; he knew Christ; Christ was his all in all; he knew himself to be in His hands; the glorious goal was ever before him; and the Holy Spirit filled him therefore with joy. (H. T. Spence, *The Canon of Scripture*, pages 231-232).”

“We have been deeply impressed over the years of study by the proliferation of the Greek preposition in the beautiful book of Philippians. Here again, we can see a part of speech being used of the Holy Spirit in a rather prominent way. If we arrange a simple outline of the natural order of these prepositions, we will see the value of a single word as emphasized by the Holy Spirit.:

## Pilgrim Way Commentary on Philippians

1. OF Jesus Christ (1:1; --ou)
2. IN Christ Jesus (1:1; en)
3. FROM the Lord Jesus Christ (1:2; apo)
4. UNTO ("till") ... Christ (1:10; eis)
5. BY Jesus Christ (1:11; dia)
6. WITH Christ (1:23; sun)
7. IN THE BEHALF OF Christ (1:29; huper)
8. OUT OF God (Christ) (3:9; ek)
9. THROUGH ... Christ (3:9; dia)
10. OF (BY) Christ Jesus (3:12; hupo)
11. UNTO (TOWARDS) God (Christ) (4:6; pros)
12. ACCORDING to ... Christ Jesus (4:19; kata)

Of course, it should be immediately acknowledged that the Greek prepositions are quite different than the English. We are edified and instructed by these particular truths which were spoken to these prepositional Philippians.

Martin Luther remarked that all religion lies in the pronouns, but Adolf Deissmann, going a step further, has virtually declared that religion resides in the preposition.

...It is now time for us to set forth the powerful use of the preposition as it pertains to Paul's Epistle to the Philippians.

There are any number of subjects briefly presented in this beautiful epistle which attract our Christian hearts in ready response. Paul wishes success for the Gospel in Philippi under any circumstances (1: 18); he sets forth his personal singleness of mind to follow Christ whether he live or die (1:21-26); he speaks of his thanksgiving for their gifts to him (4:10, 11); he speaks much of fellowship and spoke personally of Timothy, Epaphroditus as well as Euodias and Syntyche; and, as always, in every one of his epistles, Paul dealt with enemies.

When a complete perusal is made of the entire Epistle, there is a singular theme which rises above all else. That lofty theme reveals the complete adequacy of Christ in every relationship of life--pri-vation, persecution, hardship, suffering, as well as prosperity and popularity. The truth of the matter reveals that Christ gives genuine joy and triumph whatever may come if He is allowed to be the center of the life. Note the greatness of these things:

- (1) "for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (1:21).
- (2) "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: .. " (1:27a).
- (3) "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake; .. " (1:29).
- (4) "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: .. " (2:5).
- (5) "Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain" (2:16).
- (6) "Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me" (2:30).
- (7) "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ" (3:7).
- (8) "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: .. " (3:8a).
- (9) " ... And be found in him; not having mine own righteousness, .. " (3:9a).
- (10) "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made comfortable unto his death; .. " (3:10).
- (11) "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (3: 14).
- (12) "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; .. " (3:20).

## Pilgrim Way Commentary on Philippians

- (13) " ... so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved" (4:1b).
- (14) "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (4:4).
- (15) "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (4:13).

It is easy to see just how much the preposition is used in all of these relationships. We are overwhelmingly attracted to the Pauline use of this dear part of speech.

There are 1,629 words in the Greek Text of the Epistle to the Philippians. Of these words, 368 of them are prepositions of the proper, improper, compound, inherent, and double forms. We have by no means included all of the inherent forms of a preposition in the Epistle; only those related directly to the Lord Jesus Christ in that category. Over twenty-two percent of the entire amount of words in Philippians is represented by prepositions. Every relationship that a Christian could think of is signified in these prepositional relationships with the Lord Jesus Christ. Some of the 368 prepositions have distinguished themselves exclusively in Paul's presentation of the Christian with his Lord. They are as follows:

- I. Inherent Prepositions
  - 1. OF Christ Jesus (1:1, 8, 2:21; 3:8)
  - 2. OF Lord Jesus Christ (1:2)
  - 3. TO or FOR God (1:3; 2:6; 4:18)
  - 4. OF God (1:11, 14; 2:15; 3:14; 4:7)
  - 5. OF THE Spirit of Jesus Christ (1:19)
  - 6. OF Christ (1:27; 3:18)
  - 7. OF a Servant (Christ Jesus) (2:7)
  - 8. OF men (Christ Jesus) (2:7)
  - 9. TO or FOR Him (Christ Jesus) (2:9; 3:21)
  - 10. OF Jesus (2:10)
  - 11. OF God the Father (2:11)
  - 12. TO or FOR a Father (2:22)
  - 13. BY the Spirit of God (ablative; 3:3)
  - 14. OF the Lord (3:8)
  - 15. OF Him (3 times, 3:10, 21)
  - 16. TO or FOR God and Father (4:20)
  - 17. OF the Lord Jesus Christ (4:23)
- II. Proper Prepositions (directly related to Christ)
  - 1. IN Christ Jesus (1:1, 26; 2:5; 3:3, 14; 4:7, 19, 21)
  - 2. FROM God the Father and Lord Jesus Christ (1: 2)
  - 3. UNTIL the Day of Christ Jesus (1:6)
  - 4. IN (the Bowels of Christ Jesus) (1:8)
  - 5. UNTO (the) Day of Christ (1:10; 2:16)
  - 6. THROUGH Jesus Christ (1:11)
  - 7. UNTO (the) Glory and Praise of God (1:11)
  - 8. IN Christ (1:13; 2:1)
  - 9. IN (the) Lord (1:14; 2:24, 29; 3:1; 4:1, 2, 4, 10)
  - 10. WITH Christ (1:23)
  - 11. FROM God (1 :28)
  - 12. ON BEHALF OF THE Christ (1:29)
  - 13. UNTO Him (1:29)
  - 14. ON THE BEHALF OF Him (1:29)
  - 15. IN the Form of God (2:6)
  - 16. IN the Name of Jesus (2: 10)
  - 17. IN (the) Lord Jesus (2:19)

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18. ON ACCOUNT OF the Work of Christ (2:30)
19. ON ACCOUNT OF Christ (3:7)
20. ON ACCOUNT OF the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus (3:8)
21. ON ACCOUNT OF Whom (Christ) (3:8)
22. IN Him (3:9)
23. THROUGH the Faith of Christ (3:9)
24. OUT OF the Righteousness of God (3:9)
25. BY Christ Jesus (3:12)
26. TO the God (4:6)
27. IN the One (Christ) Empowering Me (4:13)
28. ACCORDING TO the Riches of Him (Christ) (4:19)

Of the 368 prepositions in the Epistle, 44 relate the Christian with some title, through the Proper Prepositions, of the Lord Jesus Christ, either as God, Father, Days, Bowels, Glory, Praise, Name, Work, Knowledge, Faith, Righteousness, Riches, or other attribute of Christ. Nowhere do we see a greater profusion of channels of blessing for the Believer in all of his experiences of life. The Christian, in all of his actions, motions, circumstances, up, down, around, towards, in, and out, is found in the Lord Jesus Christ. In these days of the Apostasy it is a precious realization to know of this abounding blessedness in the Lord Jesus. Of the 368 prepositions in the Epistle, 56 follow the form of the Inherent Preposition which emphasizes the of, by, to, and for relationships with Christ.

The remaining number of prepositions follow: 120 Proper, 11 Improper, 126 Compound, and 11 Double forms. Although these are not directly related to the Lord Jesus Himself, yet they are the relationships with life, with others, with self, and with the world. A very important fact to remember in studying prepositions is that each one, unlike the English use, may be used to express one or several either kindred or diversified ideas. But the root and the resultant meanings are needed for a better understanding of the full benefit of this part of speech. Even the remote implications are valuable. Whenever prepositional phrases, sometimes thought to be considered as a sixth form, are used in conjunction with other parts of speech, such as adjectives, pronouns, and adverbs, forming phrases, the resultant meaning of such a phrase is often idiomatic and peculiar to the Greek people themselves. This tends to deepen the richness and beauty of the entire aggregation of syntax and sentence as they come together to give to the Christian in the twentieth century a certain refreshment from the fountain of these prepositional Philippians. When we add up the total truth of this prepositional refreshment, we see once again that they serve and point to the Sovereign Noun, JESUS. (extracted from O. Talmadge Spence, *These Prepositional Philippians*).

### **Booklist on Philippians**

@ *Biblical Viewpoint- Focus on Philippians* from Bob Jones University

# *Commenting and Commentaries*, Charles Spurgeon

\$ *The Minister's Library*, Cyril Barber

% *New Testament Commentaries for Bible Expositors, 1987-92*, James E. Rosscup, Professor of Bible Exposition, Master's Seminary Journal, Spring 1993

& *New Testament Commentary Survey*, D. A. Carson

^ Irvin A. Busenitz, Master's Seminary Journal, Fall, 1992.

\* *An Introduction to the New Testament* by D. Edmond Hiebert

< Website of Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/blog/2008/09/top-5-commentaries-on-the-book-28.html>

! Joel Beeke and Randall Peterson, *Meet The Puritans*



## Pilgrim Way Commentary on Philippians

+ *Tools For Preaching and Teaching the Bible*, Stewart Custer  
Listings with no markings are by the author, Dr. John Cereghin

Comments are that of the reviewer and not necessarily those of the author nor are such reviews automatically endorsed. Not all commentaries are that useful despite these reviews. As always, discernment in choosing commentaries is required.

# Acaster, J., *Expository Lectures on Philippians*, 1827. Useful in showing the preacher how not to do it. By a violent effort we forced ourselves to read one lecture; but we have done nothing to deserve to read another. The author was domestic chaplain to an earl, meant well, and did his little best.

@ Adams, James Russell, *The Courier of God's Grace*, 1948, 175 pages. Devotional. Although Adams identifies himself as a Fundamentalist (79) he has some harsh words to say about Fundamentalism (54,64). He warmly defends the deity of Christ (65) and rejects the idea that Christ laid aside His deity when "He emptied Himself" (66). The title of the work refers to the Apostle Paul.

# Airay, Henry, *Lectures on Philippians*, 1618. [Reprinted, with Cartwright on Colossians, in Nichol's Commentaries, 1864.] Mr. Grosart says: "You will look in vain in this commentary for erudite criticism or subtle exegesis in the modern sense: but there seems to us to be an instructively true following up of the Apostolic thoughts, and a quick insight into their bearings and relative force.

! Airay's Philippians (reprinted from the Nichol's series, 1864) conveys a thorough grasp of Paul's thought and clear instruction with poignant applications on each passage. In these sermons, Airay insists on putting Pauline teaching into action. Prolific without being repetitious, this volume is punctuated with Christ-centered thoughts such as the following on Philippians 3:10: "I note two reasons why the apostle reckoned afflictions a vantage unto him: first, because in afflictions he had fellowship with Christ. Second, because by afflictions he was made like unto Christ" (p. 259). Airay's Philippians is, as Alexander Grosart says, his "one abiding monument." Also bound with this volume is Thomas Cartwright's commentary on Colossians.

@ Alford, Henry, *Philippians* in volume III of *The Greek Testament*, 1875, 44 pages. Concise comments on the Greek text. His explanations of the meaning of Greek words is helpful. On 2:5-11 he maintains the eternal pre-existence and full deity of Christ (116-170); on 3:20 he holds that *politeuma* refers to "country", not to "citizenship" (185).

@ Anderson, Henry E. *Outline Studies in Philippians*, n.d. 119 pages. Fervent, practical messages on Philippians by a missionary to China. He gives a number of outlines for the book (from Scofield, Scroggie, J. M. Gray) There are many illustrations from his ministry in China. He is a Premillennialist, indebted to W. E. Blackstone (42), and warmly defends the absolute deity and humanity of Christ (56-59).

William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible, Philippians, Colossians and Thessalonians*, 1975, 219 pages. Liberal comments but still some very useful material if one reads with discernment.

@ Barth, Karl, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, 1962, 128 pages. A brief commentary and translation by a Neo-Orthodox theologian. His style is most complex (see a sentence of 66

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words, p. 16), although he does have some helpful explanations. On 2:7-8 his position becomes clear: he comments on Christ's being made like men, "What we see is a man, the form of one exposed to all the dubiousness, ambiguity and darkness of an individual human existence, the form not of a lord but of a servant.... Flesh and blood cannot, may not and will not reveal to us who this is" (64).

@ Beare, Francis Wright, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians*, 1959, 194 pages. A liberal exposition. He thinks that Paul did not write Ephesians, but did write Philippians (20), that Philippians is a compilation of three different letters which were pieced together into the present form (24ff.), and that 2:5-11 is an early hymn based on pre-Christian myths (30) and adds "nothing to our knowledge of Jesus" (32).

& The work is too brief and defends partition theories that sometimes affect the exegesis.

@ Bell, T. P. *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Philippians*, 1917, 77 pages. A brief, simple exposition for use in Baptist Sunday schools. He is deeply indebted to Maclaren. He warmly defends the deity of Christ (24, 25).

@ Bittlinger, Arnold, *Letter of Joy*, 1975, 124 pages. Generally conservative comments on the R.S.V. He gives a brief introduction, showing the setting in Acts, etc. (pp. 7-26); stresses that the Spirit cleanses the inner life (39ff.); seems to approve of the psychoanalyst's methods (41); contrasts different words for "love" (47); names the head of the praetorian guard (57); commends the writings of mystics like Teresa of Avila (61); urges self love (73); quotes R. P. Martin's Song of Philippians 2 (75); stresses Christ's equality with God (82); warns against the Jehovah's Witnesses (p. 101); holds that "heaven" and "hell" do not necessarily refer to anything spatial (110).

& Bockmuehl, Markus, *Philippians*, Black's New Testament Commentaries and Harper's New Testament Commentaries, 1997. Very good. Bockmuehl has read everything relevant, and is as comfortable in the Greco-Roman background as in the Jewish background. He is able to wrestle with historical issues as well as with theological matters.

@ Braune, Karl, *Philippians in Lange's Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, n.d. (first American edition 1870), 76 pages. A conservative Lutheran exposition. He has thorough comments based on the Greek text, argues for the unity of the book and its Pauline authorship (5), describes the subjective mediation of Christ (17). On 2:5-11 he teaches the pre-existence of Christ (32) and His deity (33); he denies that He emptied Himself of His deity (35).

@ Boice, James Montgomery. *Philippians*, 1971, 314 pages. An expositional commentary by a well-known New Evangelical. He gives a short introduction (13-19); stresses the grace of God (28) and perseverance (40ff.); provides word studies; commends Billy Graham, Dave Wilkerson, E. Stanley Jones (69-70, 104); gives illustrations about Karl Barth (112); defends the deity of Christ and the immanency of the return of Christ (151, 153f.); urges Evangelicals into social work (182f.); contrasts the deaths of Ingersoll and Moody (256f.); dismisses standards of dress and drinking wine as legalism (280ff.).

@ Calvin, John, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians*, 1948 (written in 1548). pp. 1-130. A helpful commentary, although in places archaic. He maintains the absolute deity of Christ (55), never misses a chance to strike out

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against "the wretched Papists" (75, etc.). He attacks their teaching of purgatory from Philippians: "Who does not see that they are twice children in respect of these disgusting frivolities?" (63). He has some moving thoughts on the peace of God in 4:7 (120).

# Calvin, John and Gottlob Storr, *Expositions of Philippians and Colossians*, 1842. A sort of sandwich, with Calvin for the meat, and Storr for very hard black bread. Students who can enjoy both spiritual exposition and stern criticism with equal relish will make fine expositors.

@ Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Epistle to the Philippians* in volume XIII of the *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 1956. pages 173-255. Heart-warming sermons by the "golden-mouthed" preacher of the early church. He admits "bishop" and "elder" used to refer to the same person (184), has an eloquent exposition of 1:21 (195, 196), argues for the doctrines of the Trinity, the pre-existence of Christ, His deity, absolute equality with the Father (206-209), His full humanity (p. 213), and attacks those heresies that deny these doctrines.

& Collange, Jean-Francois, *Philippians*, 1979. A substantial work still available in English, and even in translation is forceful and provocative. But his judgments can be questioned too often to make the book a first choice.

# Daille, Jean, *Exposition of Philippians*, 1841. [This Exposition, together with Daille on Colossians, and Jenkyn on Jude, have been issued in one thick volume by Mr. Nichol of Edinburgh, 1863.]. Written in a deliciously florid style. Very sweet and evangelical: after the French manner.

@ Eadie, John, *The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians*, 1859, 341 pages. A thorough commentary on the Greek text. He gives excellent definitions of Greek words (19), stressing even the conjunctions (169). He denies that Christ emptied Himself of His deity (102), has a thorough discussion of the whole passage (2:5-11; pages 95-129). He urges men to serve Christ "without compromise" (238). He sometimes uses Latin or German without translation.

# Eastburn, M., *Lectures*, 1853. Designed for family reading. Moderately good.

@ Erdman, Charles. *The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians*, 1932, 141 pages. A devotional and practical commentary. He has a helpful introduction (7-30), holds strongly to the deity of Christ: "One must ever be careful to maintain, however, that Christ did not and could not cease to be divine, but that he could and did lay aside the 'insignia of his majesty,' the outward manifestations of His deity" (74).

& Fee, Gordon, *Philippians*, New International Commentary, 1995. Virtually as good as O'Brien (though with slightly different strengths), and more accessible. The zest of Fee's prose makes him exciting to read, and his scholarship is always rigorous. Occasionally the dogmatism of his style and passion for the truth, which makes him so enjoyable to read, makes his work slightly irritating, because he is casually dismissive of points of view not easily written off.

Grant, L.M., *Philippians*. 1966, 54 pages. Plymouth Brethren exposition, with the usual type of quotes from other Brethren writers, like John Nelson Darby. Not really that deep or useful.

@ Grayston, Kenneth. *The Letters of Paul to the Philippians and to the Thessalonians*, 1967, 48 pages. Brief comments on the text of the New English Bible. Parts of it are very British (see

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"appear in the dock," p. 15). He refers to the description of the fall of Satan in Isa. 14:12-16 as an "ancient myth" (23), and on 2:5-11 he says, "The Christological hymn is still a supremely important starting point for thought about Christ, provided we realize that it is a hymn and not the description of a journey from heaven to earth and back" (48), denying the incarnation.

Greene, Oliver B., *The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians*, 1965, 1991 (expanded edition), 197 pages. Generally useful and mostly based on the Authorized Version, but Greene had an annoying habit of being too easily impressed by "Greek scholarship" and he allowed his faith in it cloud his judgment occasionally.

@ Greenway, Alfred L. *The Epistle to the Philippians*, 1957, 75 pages. Brief expositional outline, suitable for a Bible study class. The alliterative outline is often very apt (53, 54). He maintains the deity of Christ as "very God of very God" (34), has interesting comments on 4:8 (66, 67).

% Gromacki, Robert, *Stand United in Joy: An Exposition of Philippians*, 1980. Adheres to the format established in the author's other New Testament commentaries. Ideal for personal or group Bible study. Nontechnical.

% Gwyn-Thomas, John. *Rejoice . . . Always! Studies in Philippians 4*, 1989. 159 pages. These are messages on one chapter delivered by a pastor in Cambridge, England. The book explains verses perceptively and sensitively and shows how they apply today. J. I. Packer in the introduction commends the book and the author as a good spiritual shepherd.

# Hall, Robert, *Exposition of Philippians, in twelve Discourses*, 1843. Robert Hall does not shine so much upon the printed page as he did when he blazed from the pulpit. These discourses were published after his death, from the notes of a hearer. They are good as sermons, but not remarkable as expositions.

\* Harrell, Pat Edwin, *The Letter of Paul to the Philippians* in *The Living Word Commentary*, 1969. Uses RSV. A verse-by-verse exegetical commentary.

@ Harrison, Norman B., *His ... In Joyous Experience*. Chicago, 1926, 96 pages. A Bible study of Philippians, based on a chart (74). There are outlines and comments on the whole book. He has an interesting digression on the names of Christ in Scripture (43-46), defends the deity of Christ (39).

@ Hawthorn, Gerald F. *Philippians* in *The Word Biblical Commentary*, volume 43, 1983, 284 pages. A very thorough New Evangelical commentary. He quotes and draws upon many liberal commentaries (as well as conservative ones): Barclay, Earth, Beare, Caird, Keck, Kennedy, Scott, Weiss, etc. (xxv-xxvi); defends Pauline authorship and the unity of the book (xxvii-xxxii); thinks it was written in Caesarea in A.D. 59-61 (xliiif.); notes that the plural "bishops" indicates no single officer over the Philippian church (8); explains chiasm (36, 145); interprets "to depart" as an army striking camp and moving on (48); provides more than 4 pages of bibliography on 2:5-11 (71-75); explains 2:6-11 as a hymn, but not in specific strophes, and may be by Paul (76-78,95); holds that Christ possessed "all the characteristics and qualities belonging to God" (84); claims that at the incarnation "Christ became more than God, if this is conceivable, not less than God" (88); sometimes chooses the majority text reading rather than the older one, and at times dissents from both (129,194); notes changes in verb tense; even diagrams sentences (186).

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& Accessible to students and pastors who have not kept up their Greek. Hawthorne's strength is the culling of scholarship up to his time. But his work presents some highly implausible comments (e.g., on 1:27-30, where his reading of the Greek is just about impossible, and on the "hymn," where he opts for the Byzantine reading to solve the parallelism).

< For those who would like to consult another resource after checking O'Brien and/or Silva, Hawthorne is a good place to turn. As regular readers of this blog series know, I am not a big fan of the WBC format, but many of the commentaries in the series are well worth consulting. This is one of them.

@ Hendriksen, William, *Philippians in New Testament Commentary*, 1962, 218 pages. An exposition from a strongly Reformed viewpoint. He has digressions on the perseverance of the saints (55), the unity of the Old and New Testament dispensations (82, 83); has diagrams illustrating chiasmic parallelism (72, 113). He warmly defends the pre-existence and absolute deity of Christ (106, 107), holds that Christ emptied Himself of the independent exercise of His authority (108).

@ Herklots, Hugh Gerard Gibson. *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Philippians*, 1946, 236 pages. Devotional comments from an Anglican viewpoint. He seems to refer with favor to the new kind of social life in Russia (56,57). He denies that Christ's self-emptying was of His divinity—only of His glory (66). He defends the unity of the epistle (85-86). His comments on justification by faith are eloquent (97-99).

@ Herring, Ralph A., *To Live is Christ*, 1953, 107 pages. Practical and devotional comments by a Baptist. He gives a picturesque and imaginative description of the first reading of the letter (1-16), outlines the book as love, joy, and peace (36), strongly defends the pre-existence and absolute deity of Christ (69-71).

@ Ironside, Henry Allan, *Notes on Philippians*, 1922, 126 pages. Devotional expositions. There are apt illustrations, thought-provoking comments, a strong defense of the deity of Christ (42), and a warm encouragement of joyfulness. He urges the Premillennial interpretation of the Bible (84).

@ Johnstone, Robert, *The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians*, 1955 (reprinted from 1875), 490 pages. A very thorough, practical, and homiletical exposition by a strong Presbyterian. He warns against thinking that church membership, baptism, or adherence to the Westminster Confession is ground for salvation (254,255). On 2:5-11 he maintains that pre-existence and deity of Christ (146-148). The book also includes a considerable number of notes on the Greek text.

@ Jones, Maurice, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, 1918, 184 pages. An exhaustive introduction (102 pages) and brief comments on the text (78 pages) of Philippians. He discusses the Christology of the Epistle, including the Kenosis (lxxii-lxxxi), defending the full deity of Christ (lxxvi). He knows the Greek well and gives judicious exposition of the text.

\$ Jowett, Maurice, *The High Calling: Meditations on St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians*, 1909. Meditations which contain excellent preaching values for the expositor.

@ Kelly, William, *Lectures on Philippians and Colossians*, n.d. pages 1-106. Practical expositions by a Plymouth Brethren. He explains that the reason his church has no bishops or

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deacons is that there are no apostles to appoint them (8, 9). He defends the deity and humanity of Christ (46), has some helpful comments on 3:13-14 (75-77).

@ Kennedy, Harry Angus Alexander. *The Epistle to the Philippians* in volume III of *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, 1907 (reprinted), 75 pages. A brief technical commentary on the Greek text. He often uses the grammar to bring out the meaning of passages. He defends the unity of the book (409), thinks that Paul had no fixed thoughts on eschatology (249), on 2:6-11 holds to the pre-existence of Christ (435), and His absolute deity (436).

& Kent, Homer A., *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, Eerdmans' Critical Commentary. Brief and was dated when it was written; it sometimes has useful remarks on individual works.

\$ King, Guy, *Joy Way*, 1954. A devotional exposition of real merit.

@ Laurin, Roy L., *Where Life Advances* 1954, 208 pages. Practical, helpful expositions which were originally radio messages. He uses some apt and memorable illustrations. He teaches the deity and humanity, pre-existence and incarnation of Christ (68, 69).

@ Lenski, Richard Charles Henry, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, and to the Philippians*, 1937, pages 689-901. A thorough Lutheran interpretation of the Greek text. He corrects the King James Version on the basis of the Greek, often giving helpful insights into the meaning. He attacks the teaching of the millennium (747) as well as the teaching that Christ emptied Himself of His deity (772ff). Lenski maintains that Christ remained the Mighty God even in His death (782).

@ Lightfoot, Joseph Barber, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians*, 1898 (first edition 1868), 366 pages. The most thorough and helpful commentary on the Greek text. He discusses every grammatical and interpretative problem in the book and has extended notes on special subjects (see on "bishop" and "presbyter" 95-99). He defends the pre-existence and deity of Christ, holding that He emptied Himself "not of His divine nature, for this was impossible, but of the glories, the prerogatives, of Deity. This He did by taking upon Him the form of a servant" (112). There are also extended dissertations of "The Christian Ministry" and "St. Paul and Seneca."

% Lloyd-Jones, D. Martyn, *The Life of Joy and The Life of Peace*. 2 volumes, 1989. This two-volume work on Philippians has typically rich pastoral comments from a master preacher who is well-known for his *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount* and expositions on Romans, Ephesians, and 2 Peter. This is a republication of a 1989 British edition containing messages preached at Westminster Chapel in 1947-48. Both pastors and lay readers will find stimulation in this capable and refreshing effort.

@ Maclaren, Alexander, *Philippians* in vol. XIV of *Expositions of Holy Scripture*, 1944, 279 pages. Warm, eloquent, practical expositions. There are memorable expressions: "Life is to be as Christ, for Christ, by, in, and from Christ" (221).

& Marshall, Howard, *Philippians*, 1992. Too slim to belong to the first rank, but still worth reading.

@ Martin, Ralph P., *The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians*, 1959, 186 pages.

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Brief conservative exposition. He cannot decide whether to date it early (54-55 A.D.) or late (61-63 A.D.) (36), nor does he decide whether 2:5-11 is an early hymn or Paul's prose (106, 107). He sometimes gives helpful background from archaeology (118); other times he explains a rich verse in a pedantic manner (183).

+ Melick, Richard, *Philippians*, New American Commentary, 1991, 158 pages. This is a solid exposition based on the NIV. The author holds to the inerrancy (p. 7). He defends Pauline authorship and integrity (p. 30-32). He does not hesitate to correct the language of the NIV (p. 55, 64, 222, 242, 354, etc). He attacks the idea of soul sleep (p. 86 note); defends both the humanity and the deity of Christ (p. 104); and thinks that 2:5-11 is a hymn, but Paul used it and approved it (p. 109). He does like to quote liberals: G. B. Caird (p. 153), H. A. A. Kennedy (p. 157), F. W. Beare (p. 159).

@ Meyer, Frederick Brotherton, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, 1952, 261 pages. A warmly devotional exposition. He divides the epistle into 27 short sections, some of which are masterpieces of exposition. On 2:5-8 he maintains the absolute deity as well as humanity of Christ (82-85): He empties Himself only of His glory.

# Meyer, H. A. W., *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistles to the Philippians and Colossians*. No doubt wonderfully learned, but we cannot get on with it. Quotations from heretics we have happily never heard of before are of no great use to simple believers like ourselves.

@ Michael, J. Hugh. *The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians*. The Moffatt Commentary, 1927, 252 pages. A paraphrase and exposition of Philippians. He argues that Paul write it from Ephesus, not Rome (xii-xxi). He thinks that Christ achieved equality with God at His exaltation (87). On occasion he gives helpful background material and interpretation (134, 135). At times he will cite the papyri for illustrations of New Testament truth (27).

@ Motyer, J. A, *Philippian Studies: The Richness of Christ*, 1966, 188 pages. A carefully reasoned exposition—all exposition, no introduction. He includes helpful summaries of scriptural teaching (see on knowledge, page 27). On 2:6-8 he strongly denies that Christ lost any of His divine attributes in His emptying of Himself (80). Although there are many helpful sections, there are some flaws. He does not decide whether the "destruction" of the wicked is annihilation or conscious personal separation (62).

< I have benefited from everything I have read by Alec Motyer. He never comments on Scripture in a detached manner. His love for the word of God and for God who gave His word always shines through. This is one of the more useful introductory level commentaries on Philippians.

@ Moule, Handley C. G., *Philippian Studies*, 1898, 265 pages. A warmly devotional, yet scholarship exposition. He has a paraphrase of all the epistle and most helpful explanations. He also has helpful comments on the names of Christ used in Philippians (255-260).

@ Miller, Jac. J., *The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians and to Philemon*, 1955.156 pages. A concise, but especially helpful exposition. He defends the unity of the epistle (20), has a thorough discussion of 2:5-8, defending the pre-existence and deity of Christ (77-86). There are a number of notes on the Greek text throughout the work which are also helpful. He has interesting comments on the "perfection" passage (3:12-16, pages 120-127).

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\$ Mueller, Jacobus Johannes, *The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians*, New International Critical Commentary on the New Testament, 1955. Concise and helpful. Defends the unity of the epistle and the pre-existence and deity of Christ. Praiseworthy treatment of the Greek text. Pedantic style.

# Neat, Charles, *Discourses from Philippians*, 1841. Strongly Calvinistic, and correct to a hair; but utterly devoid of originality either of thought or expression.

# Neander, Johann, August Wilhelm, *Philippians and James, practically and historically explained*. Without dwelling upon the wording of the Epistle, Neander reproduces its spirit in other language, and so expounds it. The little work will be greatly appreciated by a certain order of minds.

@ Noble, Frederick A., *Discourses on the Epistle of Paul to the Philippians*, 1896, 385 pages. Sermons covering all of Philippians by a conservative Congregationalist pastor of the last century. He holds to the pre-existence and absolute deity of Christ (103-108), uses cross-references to good advantage, refers to John Bunyan and others.

& O'Brien, Peter, *Philippians*, New International Greek Testament Commentary, 1991, 597 pages. The best commentary on the Greek text of Philippians is the magisterial work by Peter T. O'Brien. O'Brien has read and thought through everything of importance, with the result that he gives reasons for his exegetical decisions. At the same time, this commentary is theologically rich, even if its prose is sometimes pedestrian. The treatment of the so-called Christ hymn (2:5-11) is superb.

^ It is the aim of this series to "demonstrate the value of studying the Greek New Testament and help toward the revival of such study" (x) as well as "to serve those who are engaged in the ministry of the Word of God" (xi). Attempts to balance these are not always successful; yet, for the most part, O'Brien has achieved this in his volume on Philippians. The book is a well written, in-depth exegetical commentary on the epistle. The author's penchant for a thorough elucidation of the text, including a diligent presentation of the various viewpoints on different issues, provides an excellent foundation for understanding the epistle. He clearly sets forth his own viewpoint on each issue, supporting the tenets of his conclusion from the Greek text. The extensive use of footnotes and the Scripture index are very beneficial as well. He begins not with introductory matters but with an extensive (twenty-page) bibliography, providing a "who's who" list of resources. From there the author turns to a thorough treatment of the book's setting, authorship, and date. He discusses the background of the Roman colony, the intricacies of its religious heritage, and the coming of the gospel with the arrival of the apostle Paul. He argues against those who call into question the climactic story of the Philippian jailor's conversion and the events surrounding it (cf. Acts 16). He contends at some length for the unity and integrity of the epistle, carefully reviewing the evidence both for and against (10-18). With clarity he details the views on the letter's date and place of origination, concluding that the evidence favors the Roman imprisonment around A.D. 62 (18-26). The writer suggests that Judaizers are Paul's opponents in both 1:15-17 and 3:1 ff. In the latter reference, a more hostile group of Judaizers is in view than in the former. But the enemies in 1:27-28 are heathen inhabitants of Philippi, who threatened persecution of believers (26-35). O'Brien devotes nearly one hundred pages to the humiliation and exaltation of Christ in 2:5-11 (186-271), discussing the passage both as a unit and in its component parts. He regards its literary form as "a traditional hymnic or poetic piece" (189). He notes that the passage belongs unquestionably in



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its present context, with its vocabulary anchored in what proceeds and what follows and with its prefiguring of themes that occur later. "In fact, it fits its present context so well that it is hard to see it detached from it" (202). He also includes a number of appendixes covering issues such as "taking the form of a bondservant" and "He poured Himself out to death" (Isa 53:12). "Work out your salvation . . ." (2:12-13) is the subject of an equally thorough and in-depth treatment. The author concludes that the "salvation" of which Paul speaks here is not in a sociological sense to describe the spiritual health of the Philippian Church. Rather, it is "an exhortation to common action, urging the Philippians to show forth the graces of Christ in their lives, to make their eternal salvation fruitful in the here and now as they fulfill their responsibilities to one another as well as to non-Christians" (280). Overall, O'Brien's work is a valuable contribution and deserves wide circulation. The serious student will find it a most helpful resource.

< The best commentary on the epistle to the Philippians is the work by Peter T. O'Brien. Because it is in the NIGTC series, it is more technical than the average commentary. Some knowledge of Greek is required to use it fully. O'Brien's comments are judicious and very helpful. Very highly recommended.

& Osiek, Carolyn, *Philippians and Philemon*, Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament, 2000. She is very keen to relate Philippians to current discussions of slavery and women's issues.

# Peirce, James, *Paraphrase on Philippians, Colossians, and Hebrews*, 1733. Had he but known the Lord, his writings would have been admirable. He conceals his Arianism, but it is fatal to his acceptance with believers. He wrote after the manner of Mr. Locke.

\$ Pentecost, John Dwight, *The Joy of Living: A Study of Philippians*, 1973. This series of expository messages not only does justice to the apostle's purpose, but edifies and enriches the believer as well.

Phillips, John, *Exploring Ephesians and Philippians*, 1993, 1995, 207 pages. Good, solid exposition, premillennial and dispensational. Phillips uses and supports the King James Bible. His outlines are worth the price of the book. A recommended volume in a recommended series.

@ Plummer, Alfred, *A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians*, 1919, 138 pages. A brief but thorough commentary. He frequently uses the Greek, draws illustrations from the papyri, defends the Pauline authorship and integrity of the epistle, holds that joy is the "dominant note of the Epistle" (p. 9), defends the deity and pre-existence of Christ (p. 42,43). His grammatical notes are often very helpful (p. 74,75). He lists a bibliography of 39 commentaries on Philippians (xxi-xxii).

@ Rainy, Robert., *Philippians* in volume VI of the *Expositor's Bible*, 1892-1905. pages 109-185. A practical, conservative exposition. He defends the unity of the epistle (p. 116); has eloquent comments on 1:21 (p. 127), 3:20-21 (p. 171-174). On the "kenosis" passage, 2:5-11, he maintains the pre-existence, deity, and humanity of Christ (p. 136, 137).

& Reed, Jeffrey T., *Philippians*, 1997. A highly technical and highly competent discourse analysis of the epistle. Do not buy the book unless you are as rich as Croesus; that's what libraries are for (\$80!).

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@ Robertson, Archibald Thomas, *Paul's Joy in Christ*, 1917, 267 pages. Expository messages based on the Greek text of Philippians. They are warm-hearted and genuinely helpful. He gives the exact vocabulary meaning of words, as well as the interpretation of passages. On 2:1-11 he affirms the full humanity and deity of Christ (130). His exaltation is "the taking up of the humanity of Jesus into His deity with new glory" (140).

# Robertson, J. S. S., *Lectures on Philippians*. Lectures which will never set the Thames on fire.

Ruckman, Peter, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on Galatians-Colossians*, 1980, 690 pages. A generally useful commentary written from a Bible-believing, Baptist, dispensational, premillennial position. Based on the King James Version. Ruckman spends lots of paper and ink attacking other commentators who use other versions or who change the King James readings, which is not really necessary. A few unusual interpretations do not detract from the value of this work.

@ Scott, Ernest F., and Robert R. Wicks. *Philippians* in volume XI of the *Interpreter's Bible*, 1955, pages 1-129. A liberal interpretation. Defends Pauline authorship and unity of the epistle (8, 9), denies that of the Pastoral Epistles (3). They hold that men must seek "to recover the whole truth about the spiritual nature of man" (34). Although they admit that Paul taught the deity of Christ (48), they mention the myths, such as that underlying the fall of Lucifer (Isaiah 14), and holds that Paul, influenced by such (49), thus portrays the work of Christ in "a mythological framework" (51). They advise ministers to read Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer* (79).

% Silva, Moises, *Philippians*. Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary, 1988, 255 pages. Silva's treatment is a high-quality evangelical production, usually with good insights into the Greek and in the handling of differing viewpoints in current literature. This was the first commentary in the Wycliffe series. On many verses he is top-notch in perceiving and addressing issues with clear language. He sees two groups against Paul in Philippi, true Jewish Christians holding that grace ideas led Paul too far in freedom from the law (Philippians 1) and Judaizers within the Christian circle (Philippians 3). To him the theme of the book is not joy, but steadfast continuance in sanctification, victorious over difficulties. The author weighs differing interpretations carefully in his vast awareness of literature on the book.

@ Simcox, Carroll E. *They Met at Philippi*, 1958, 187 pages. Liberal devotional studies. He calls Paul "the innocent father of all heresies" because of his obscurity (ix), holds that Titus and I Timothy are not by Paul (10), denies the unity of Philippians (20), has many literary allusions and quotations. But he clearly denies that Christ emptied Himself of His divine powers in the incarnation (72), and also denies that Christianity is just one of several world religions (77). The Sermon on the Mount is "sanity preached to a planet of lunatics" (78).

@ Strauss, Lehman, *Devotional Studies in Philippians*, 1959, 235 pages. Devotional expositions of Philippians, dividing the book into 20 short paragraphs. He has an uncanny gift for alliteration: all 20 chapters have titles beginning with "P" and each chapter is further subdivided into an alliterative outline. On 2:5-11 he advocates the full deity and humanity of Christ (111-114).

& Synge, F., *Philippians*, Torch Bible Commentaries, 1951. Too brief to give much help (except for a good comment on Christ as "Adam in reverse" in 2:1-11).

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@ Tenney, Merrill C, *Philippians: The Gospel at Work*, 1956, 102 pages. A brief popular exposition. There is a chapter of introduction (13-31) and four short chapters on the four chapters of Philippians. On the phrase "emptied himself" (2:7), he defends the deity of Christ: "He was just as much God when He walked the streets of Nazareth as when He was in the courts of heaven" (57).

# Todd, James, F., *Apostle Paul and the Church at Philippi. Acts XVI. and Philippians*, 1864. A respectable work. The author is sound in doctrine and valorous in controverting error, and he says many good things; but he rather uses the text than expounds it. He deserves a reading; but men with whom money is scarce need not purchase this book.

# Toller, Thomas, *Discourses on Philippians*, 1855. A very favourable specimen of plain, popular exposition. Nothing either deep, or new, or critically accurate; but sensible and practical.

@ Vaughan, Charles John, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians*, 1864, 353 pages. Twenty-one messages covering the whole of Philippians, preached from October 1861 to May 1862. Although some messages are local in their interest, most of these sermons are rich expositions of the text, accompanied by a paraphrase of the Greek text. On 2:5-11 he defends the full deity of Christ.

@ Vincent, Marvin R. *The Epistles to the Philippians and to Philemon*. International Critical Commentary, 1897, 199 pages. A thorough, critical commentary on the Greek text. He defends Pauline authorship and integrity (v, xxxii), has helpful comments on the meaning of Greek words and the grammatical construction. He denies that bishops and deacons were church officers of distinct order at this time (42), holds that Paul taught the pre-existence and deity of Christ (57, 83), has a thorough excursus on 2:6-11 (78-90).

& Adds virtually nothing to the more recent commentaries.

\$ Walvoord, John Flipse, *Philippians: Triumph in Christ*, 1971. A brief exposition.

@ Watson, Thomas. *The Art of Divine Contentment*, n.d., 109 pages. A Puritan exposition of Philippians 4:11. He divides up the text and expounds it in a thorough and devotional manner. He also discusses the nature of contentment, reasons for our contentment, how one can gain contentment, and answers a whole list of questions and complaints; provides many motives to contentment; warns that one should never be content with a state of sin; and concludes with a number of practical rules to help in being content.

\* Wuest, Kenneth, *Philippians in the Greek New Testament for the English Reader*, 1942. A simplified commentary on the Greek for the benefit of the English reader.

& Witherington, Ben III, *Friendship and Finances in Philippi*, 1994. Too brief to belong to the first rank, and the series to which it belongs, *New Testament in Context*, announces to the reader where the focus is.

# Wiesinger, Lic. August, *Commentary on Philippians, Titus, and I Timothy; in continuation of the work of Olshausen*, 1857. Many mistake this for Olshausen's. It is of the critical and grammatical school, and bristles all over with the names of the German band. We prefer the Puritanic gold to the German silver which is now in fashion.

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@ Willis, G. Christopher, *Sacrifices of Joy*, n.d., 361 pages. Devotional meditations on Philippians by a missionary. He gives the theme verse of the book (1:21, pp. 9ff.); stresses the recognizing, not appointment, of elders (24ff.); gives many illustrations from Chinese missions; distinguishes between Greek words; shows 7 steps down in Christ's humiliation and 7 up in exaltation (137, 43); provides insight from the papyri (150f.); holds that "work out" means "cultivate" (154f.); teaches the Pretribulation Rapture (246f.; 296); warns about the ease with which misunderstandings arise between believers (283f.); has famous verses set in beautiful type.

**Philippians Chapter 1**

**1:1 Paul and Timothy, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:**

**1:2 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**I. Introduction 1:1,2**

**A. 1:1 Paul**

1. The “small one”. After his conversion, Saul abandoned his more honorable Jewish name and adopted the more humble Christian name, which is first used in Acts 13:9. He was “Saul, the Big Shot. Saul the Career Pharisee. Saul the Learned and Proud”. But when such men meet Christ, they go from worldly important “Sauls” to nobody “Pauls” who serve humbly. 1:1

2. Paul does not refer to himself as an apostle here. This is a friendly letter, written to a church where neither his ministry nor authority are under attack, so the “official designation” is not needed here.

a. Paul does mention his apostleship in Romans 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:1; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Galatians 1:1; Ephesians 1:1; Colossians 1:1; 1 Timothy 1:1; 2 Timothy 1:1; Titus 1:1. Paul does not use the term in either of the Thessalonian epistles, in Philemon nor here.

b. “The opening sentence sets the tone of the whole letter. It is characteristically a letter from a friend to his friends. With the exception of the letter to the Thessalonians and the little personal note to Philemon, Paul begins every letter with a statement of his apostleship; he begins, for instance, the letter to the Romans: “Paul a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle”. In the other letters he begins with a statement of his official position, why he has the right to write, and why the recipients have the duty to listen; but not when he writes to the Philippians. There is no need; he knows that they will listen and listen lovingly. Of all his Churches, the Church at Philippi was the one to which Paul was closest; and he writes, not as an apostle to members of his Church, but as a friend to his friends (William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible, Philippians, Colossians and Thessalonians*, page 9).”

**B. 1 ;1 Timothy**

1. Paul’s apprentice and son in the faith.

2. Timothy must have been able to visit Paul while he was in prison with some regularity as he was with Paul and assisted in the writing of this epistle.

3. “Timothy” comes from a combination of two Greek words which together mean “he who honors God”.

**C. 1:1 “servants”**

1. Strong’s #1401 *doulos*; a slave, bondman, man of servile condition, one who gives himself up to another’s will those whose service is used by Christ in extending and advancing his cause among men, devoted to another to the disregard of one’s own interests, a servant, attendant.

a. We note the Greek word “*doulos*”, translated “servants” in 1:1, James 1:1, 2 Peter 1:1 and Jude 1.

b. Some prefer this be translated “slaves” but “servants” is a superior translation. God has servants but no slaves.

c. Let us remember that:

i. Slaves serve their masters out of fear, not love.

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ii. Servants serve because they love their master and are interested in his welfare. Slaves could come and go, but not servants.

a. See Exodus 21:1-6 for an example of this kind of servant.

iii. The Master is responsible for His servant's needs - feeding, housing, clothing, and all else is the master's concern. It is because we are God's servants that He says "Therefore . . . take no thought . . ." in Matthew 6:24-25, for the needs of life. Paul will say later in Philippians 4:19, "My God shall supply all your need."

iv. The Master is responsible for His servant's duties - they will not choose their own task, or sphere of ministry.

v. The Master is responsible for His servant's supplies - "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges?" in 1 Corinthians 9:7. The soldier has all his military equipment provided; and likewise, the servant is supplied with everything needful for the discharge of all his duties.

vi. There is no higher call in life for a man to be known as a servant of Jesus Christ and faithful service will be rewarded by our Master (Matthew 25:21,23).

vii. This passage shows that Christians are servants and not slaves for who rewards a slave who serves out of compulsion? But you do reward a servant who serves out of love. And the Lord said in the Matthew 25 references "Well done, thou good and faithful SERVANT, not "slave".

viii. Paul always carried this attitude of a servant. Yes, he was an apostle and carried apostolic authority in the churches, but he always saw himself not as a ruler but as a servant, one who was to serve and minister unto the saints of God.

a. It was genuine with Paul as well, not like any hypocrite pope who likes to sign his letters "a servant of the servants of Christ" when he obviously means no such thing.

b. Pastors in our Bible-believing churches must adopt this attitude and stop trying to promote themselves or their ministries. Preachers are not to be using their people or lording their authority over them or micro-managing the lives of the sheep or carting around an attitude that they have some special "in" with God simply because they won a few souls or have a large church. Pride and arrogance are the hallmarks of the typical fundamental preacher, not humility or service, which is one reason why our churches are in such horrible spiritual shape.

### D. 1:1 "saints"

1. Strong's #40 hagios; a holy thing or person, something or someone set apart, consecrated. It has a common root 'ag-', with 'agnos (Strong's #53), chaste, pure. Its fundamental idea is separation, consecration.

a. Any born again Christian is a saint, contrary to Romanist errors in teaching that the Church must declare a certain person to be a saint. The Bible knows nothing about that. A "saint" is simply a believer that has been set apart unto God, which happened to us positionally at salvation.

2. "All the saints" so as in Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 1:2; but not Ephesians 1:1; Colossians 1:2. Totality is very conspicuous in Philippians 1:3, 4, 7, 8.

a. In writing to the Philippian Christians as individual saints, Paul thinks of them 'all' without exception. There was disunity in this local church (as he deals with in

chapter 4) and Paul didn't want to write anything to make it appear that he was taking any sides.

**E. 1:1 "Jesus Christ...Christ Jesus"**

1. Here we have "Christ Jesus" and earlier, Paul uses "Jesus Christ". The difference is in the emphasis.

a. "Jesus Christ" first references the humanity of Christ and emphasizes that. "Christ Jesus" calls His deity to our attention first.

2. "in Christ Jesus" "Paul wished to differentiate the saints of God from the 'saints' in the Greek mystery religions. The word 'in' is used with the locative of sphere. The saints were saints in the sphere of Christ. That is, Christ is the sphere in which the believer has his new life and all his interests and activities. The believer's new existence is circumscribed by Christ. Paul put this in other words in the expression 'For me to live is Christ' (Kenneth Wuest, *Philippians in the Greek New Testament for the English Reader*)."

**F. 1:1 "bishops"**

1. Strong's #1985 episkopos, from epi (Strong's #1909), upon; and skopos (Strong's #4649) a watchman; an overseer, guardian, superintendent.

a. In Athens, episkopoi were magistrates sent to outlying cities to organize and govern them. This would be the pastor, or the presiding elder/overseer of the church, the one who had charge of the congregation and supervised its activities, what we would call a "pastor". "The word was originally a secular title, designating commissioners appointed to regulate a newly-acquired territory or a colony. It was also applied to magistrates who regulated the sale of provisions under the Romans. In the Septuagint it signifies inspectors, superintendents, taskmasters, see 2 Kings 11:19; 2 Chronicles 34:12,17; or captains, presidents, Nehemiah 11:9,14,22. In the apostolic writings it is synonymous with presbyter or elder; and no official distinction of the episcopate as a distinct order of the ministry is recognized (Marvin Vincent, *Word Studies in Greek New Testament*)."

2. Of course, the term here has nothing to do with a Catholic, Methodist or Pentecostal "bishop" as that concept of a "super-pastor" or a "territorial pastor over a number of churches" is foreign to the New Testament. Pastors of local churches are bishops as the term describes the nature of the authority of the office.

a. Baptists tend to shun away from terms like "elders" and "bishops" to describe the spiritual leadership in the local churches but there is no good reason to do that since both are Biblical terms.

3. "In those days a bishopric was not a great worldly prize, but a serious spiritual care which, however excellent an employment, was no object of ambition or means of lucre. "If any man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work"; but it called for such self-denial, such constant trial by night and day, deeper even in the Church than from the world without, that it was by no means a thing for the best qualified in the Spirit to rush into, but to take up with the utmost gravity, as that to which he was called of God. For this, among other reasons, the Church never pretended to choose or constitute a bishop. It was invariably by apostolic authority. One or more apostles acted in this — not necessarily Paul only or the twelve. It might be a Barnabas; at least we find in certain cases Paul and Barnabas acting together in choosing elders or bishops. But this may show what a delicate task it was. The Lord never gives it to any person except an apostle or an apostolic man (that is, a man sent out by an apostle to do that work for him, such as Titus and perhaps Timothy). (William Kelly, *The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians*)."

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4. Was there more than one congregation at Philippi? The other option is multiple leaders/elders (pastors) in the house churches, which makes more sense if this was a large, single church.

5. Baptist churches tend to be "pastor led" but a wise pastor will have elders to assist him in his pastoral duties and these men could also be "pastors" along with "the pastor". I see no problem in such a system and having elders in your church with pastoral authority does not make you a Presbyterian. It makes you a better Baptist because it will make it harder for the pastor to develop into an ecclesiastical dictator if ruling authority in the church is spread out among several men. It is harder to establish and maintain a dictatorship than it is an oligarchy.

### **G. 1:1 "deacons"**

1. Strong's #1249 diakonos, a servant, waiter, one who executes the commands of another, literally, a "runner through the dust", one who raises a cloud of dust by his haste.

2. It represents a servant, not in his relation, but in his activity.

3. This office was created by the Jerusalem Church in Acts 6 to administrate the social work of the church with regards to the widows, and to take off some of the more menial tasks of the ministry to allow the apostles more time for prayer and study. These are the servants in the church.

4. Deacons have no ruling authority in the church- they are to serve and to assist the leadership in carrying out more of the "menial" tasks to take those loads off the pastor. The bishops handle the ruling ministry of the church while the deacons handle the practical, day-to-day operations and ministries of the church.

5. It takes a very special kind of saint to deliberately take on a position of humble service to God's people without using or seeing the office of "deacon" as a stepping stone to more pastoral-like ministry or bishop-like authority. That might happen, but the office of deacon is a church office in its own right, not to be thought of as inferior to the pastoral office.

6. No "deaconesses" are mentioned in the Philippian church, because there were none since it was not a Biblical office! Paul is very clear in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 that only men can fill the deacon's office. Women can do the work of a deacon, but they cannot hold that office.

7. In no other church epistle does Paul greet the deacons. Why here? What was so special about the Philippian deacons that he singles them out for a greeting? This is the only place where the "bishops and deacons" are mentioned together.

8. "The opening of this Epistle is different from that of most in one very interesting particular. It is a difference shared by all three of the Macedonian Epistles - this, and the two to the Thessalonians - and by the little personal note to Philemon. It consists in the somewhat noteworthy absence of the word "Epistle". In all his other letters, Paul feels it incumbent upon him to remind his readers that he writes with all the weight that his sublime position gives him; he will have occasion to administer rebuke, and, sometimes, rather bluntly, to give directions - and lest, because he was their friend, they might treat his words not too seriously, he takes care to let them understand that he speaks with an authority, and that they must give due and proper heed to what he says. But his case is otherwise when he writes to his beloved Philippians. "The church at Philippi", says Dr. Graham Scroggie, "was almost quite free from those errors which beset so many of the churches of that day"; and he goes on to quote Professor Findlay as saying, "This is an Epistle of the heart, a true love letter, full of friendship, gratitude, and confidence." (Guy King, Joy Way, *An Exposition of the Epistle of Paul to the Philippians*)."



**H. 1:2 “grace”**

1. Strong's #5485 charis; grace, that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness: grace of speech, good will, loving-kindness, favor, of the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues, benefit, bounty, thanks, (for benefits, services, favors), recompense, reward.

2. “In its use among the pagan Greeks it referred to a favor done by one Greek to another out of pure generosity of his heart and with no hope of reward...In the case of the Greek, the favor was done to a friend, never an enemy...The Greek word referred to an action that was beyond the ordinary course of what might be expected and was therefore commendable (Kenneth Wuest, *Philippians in the Greek New Testament for the English Reader*).”

3. Paul usually wished both “grace and peace” (1:2) upon his audience. Paul uses this formula in all his epistles. “Grace” is a Western, Gentile term, and “peace”, is Eastern and Oriental/Jewish. Paul combines both Jewish ‘peace’ and Gentile ‘grace’ in one salutation as a pledge of unity between East and West, between Jew and Gentile.

4. “Paul feels that the ordinary Greek salutation *cairein* or the Eastern *eirhnh soi* is too meager for Christian intercourse (H. A. A. Kennedy, *The Epistle to the Philippians, in the Expositor's Greek New Testament*, volume 3, page 417).”

**I. 1:2 “peace”**

1. Strong's # 1515 *eirênê*; probably from a primary verb *eirô* (to join); a state of national tranquility, exemption from the rage and havoc of war, peace between individuals, harmony, concord, security, safety, prosperity, felicity, (because peace and harmony make and keep things safe and prosperous), of Christianity, the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, of whatsoever sort that is, the blessed state of devout and upright men after death. It has the idea of “to bind together”.

**J. 1:2 “God our Father”**

1. Only Christians can refer to God as “Father”. Notice Paul uses the term “our Father” while writing to a local church.

a. The unsaved must refer to Satan as their father (John 8:44).

b. God is called the Father of Christians, as those who through Christ have been exalted to an especially close and intimate relationship with God, and who no longer dread him as a stern judge of sinners but revere him as their reconciled and loving Father.

**K. 1:2 “Lord”**

1. This was a favorite designation of Jesus Christ in the early church.

2. In 1:2, there is a reference to two distinct and separate personalities in the Godhead. All that is missing is a reference to the Holy Spirit and the Trinity would be in view here.

**1:3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,**

**1:4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,**

**1:5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;**

**1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:**

**1: 7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.**

**1: 8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ**

**II. Paul's Thankfulness For The Philippians 1:3-8**

**A. 1:3 Whenever Paul went to prayer, he thought of the Philippian church and thank God for the people there and for their testimony and love toward him.**

**B. 1:4 "prayer"**

1. It was no burden for Paul to pray for the Philippians, but he gladdened his heart whenever he did so. One reason for that was because this was one church that started right and stayed right and that was not a source of grief or consternation to him, as were the churches of Galatia or in Corinth. A church that is "behaving itself" is a source of joy for any preacher.

**C. 1:4 "joy"**

1. "Joy" is also the keynote of this epistle. Compare 1:18; 2:2,19,28; 3:1; 4:1,4.  
2. "The passion or emotion excited by the acquisition or expectation of good; that excitement of pleasurable feelings which is caused by success, good fortune, the gratification of desire or some good possessed, or by a rational prospect of possessing what we love or desire; gladness; exultation; exhilaration of spirits. Joy is a delight of the mind, from the consideration of the present or assured approaching possession of a good. Gayety; mirth; festivity. A glorious and triumphant state (Webster's 1828 dictionary)."

**D. 1:5 "fellowship"**

1. Strong's #2842 koinônia; fellowship, association, community, communion, joint participation, intercourse, the right hand as a sign and pledge of fellowship (in fulfilling the apostolic office), a gift jointly contributed, a collection, a contribution, as exhibiting an embodiment and proof of fellowship.  
2. There are several phrases relating to the gospel in Philippians 1:  
a. Fellowship in the gospel- 1:5  
b. Defense of the gospel- 1:7  
c. Confirmation of the gospel- 1:7  
d. Furtherance of the gospel- 1:12  
e. Faith of the gospel- 1:27  
3. The Philippian church was a partner in Paul's ministry, supporting him both by prayer but also by financial gifts and by other means of encouragement. Although they were not physically there with Paul as he ministered, the Philippians were certain to share in the rewards of such a partnership/fellowship.

**E. 1:6 "being confident"**

1. Perfect tense in the Greek, meaning that Paul's confidence was absolute, fixed, settled and not subject to change or reconsideration. This is a very bold and strong statement.

**F. 1:6 "a good work"**

1. This is the work of sanctification that God starts in the heart and life of every believer. Man does not start it. Man cannot save himself nor can he sanctify himself without divine aid. Immediately after salvation, when we receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, God begins that slow, painful and lifelong process of conforming us more and more to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29), with the goal of making us Christ-like and conforming us to the family image.  
2. This is not only a "good work", but it is the best work of all by God in the life of the believer. It is all the work of God; salvation, sanctification and safekeeping.

**G. 1:6 "will perform"**

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1. A work God starts He will finish. He does not leave any work half-done.
2. Strong's #2005 *epiteleō*; from *epi* (Strong's #1909) on, upon; and *teleō* (Strong's #5055) finish, end; to bring to an end, accomplish, perfect, execute, complete. The *epi*-prefix gives the idea its fullest meaning, having the thought of "to fully complete". When God is finished with us, His work in us will be fully finished, not to be added upon. This will only be the case for the believer after the Judgment Seat of Christ. After we finish that, we will be as holy and sanctified as it will be possible for us to be since we will be in our glorified bodies by then. God always finishes what He starts in the life of the believer. After all, it took the death of His own Son to even start that work of sanctification in the life of the believer, so the cost is too high for the Father not to complete it.
3. This is laid out in Romans 8:29- that we be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. God began that long, slow and often painful conforming process of our lives to the image of Christ at salvation and He will continue working in us until the "day of Jesus Christ", which is the bema judgment that will take place after the rapture. The reason behind our salvation is that we might be conformed to the image of Christ physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually. God wants us to resemble Christ in every way possible. This is done through the work of progressive sanctification in our lives. As we live longer for God, we ought to also be growing in grace and knowledge of the truth. The older we get, the more Christ-like we become.

### H. 1:6,10 "day of Jesus Christ"

1. The bema judgment, or Judgment Seat of Christ.
2. God does this work as long as we are on earth, but this work of sanctification ceases when we leave this earth, either by death or rapture. Once we are in heaven, in our glorified bodies, this work is no longer necessary.
3. For other references of the "day of (Jesus) Christ", we see the following:
  - a. 1 Corinthians 1:8 Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.
  - b. Philippians 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:
  - c. Philippians 1:10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;
  - d. Philippians 2:16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain.
  - e. 2 Thessalonians 2:2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

I. Verse 6 is also a good text for the eternal security of the believer. What God has started in us He will finish and that would be impossible if we were able to lose our salvation or if God had intentions of taking back that which He so freely gave unto us. When we were saved, God began doing that good work to conform us to the image of Christ and He will continue that until the day we stand at the bema. Yes, we can make that conforming process difficult by carnality and backsliding, but God's will shall be done in our lives, one way or the other! Paul lays down no circumstance in this verse where God would not complete this good work! He who has begun thus good work must carry it on to its end.

1. God will complete it! He will not allow circumstances or trials and troubles to interfere with these plans. In fact, our trials and tribulations are part of the overall will and plan of God to bring about that completion. What we may mistake as evil may actually be a tool

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and an instrument of God to fulfill His plan for our lives for His glory and our good (Romans 8:28,29).

### **J. 1:7 “meet”**

1. 7a Strong’s #1342 dikaios; righteous, observing divine laws, in a wide sense, upright, righteous, virtuous, keeping the commands of God, used of him whose way of thinking, feeling, and acting is wholly conformed to the will of God, and who therefore needs no rectification in the heart or life, in a narrower sense, rendering to each his due and that in a judicial sense, passing just judgment on others, whether expressed in words or shown by the manner of dealing with them.

a. “MEET, [L. convenio.] Fit; suitable; proper; qualified; convenient; adapted, as to a use or purpose (Webster’s 1828 Dictionary).”

### **K. 1:7 “defense”**

1. Strong’s #627 apologia; verbal defense, speech in defense, a reasoned statement or argument. This sort of defense is not a physical defense with force or arms, but a verbal, rational and reasonable “apology” on behalf of the truth and against the error. We get our theological words “apology” and “apologetics” from this.

2. The word is a Greek judicial term referring to an attorney talking his client off from a charge, thus presenting a verbal defense. A successful defense would result in the gospel being confirmed. Also see the identical attitude in 1:17.

3. What was Paul defending? The various heresies plaguing the early church, such as:

a. The Judaizers

b. The Gnostics

c. Other various false teachers and the false doctrines they preached in their attempts to make a living.

### **L. 1:7 “confirmation”**

1. Strong’s #951 bebaiôsis; confirmation, to confirm and validate the gospel message.

Only used here and in Hebrews 6:16 in the New Testament.

M. 1:7- Paul’s sufferings for the sake of the gospel would also benefit the Philippians, as well as any other faithful church or Christian, even to this hour, 1900 years later. God is very generous with spreading the grace and credit among His people. As the Philippians were fellow-laborers with Paul in his ministry, so would they also share in the spiritual benefits from that ministry, just as our church gets a share of the spiritual fruit from a mission whom we support. Our support made that ministry and the resultant fruit possible, so we get a share of that benefit. The same is true in soulwinning. One man does not win a soul, although most of the time, the person who “reels the fish in” usually takes the credit for having “won that soul”. But dozens of people may have been involved in that over a period of many years in their witnesses and prayers on behalf of that sinner. They may not actually lead that soul to Christ, but you can be sure that they will partakers of that grace that results from that salvation.

### **N. 1:8 “long”**

1. Strong’s #1971 epipotheô; from epi (Strong’s #1909) an intensive; and potheô, to yearn; to long for, desire, to pursue with love, to long after, to lust, harbor forbidden desire. The epi- prefix brings out the full force of the word.

2. This shows the strength and intensity of Paul’s desire to resume his fellowship with the Philippians.

### **O. 1:8 “bowels”**

1. We would say “heart” today. The bowels were considered to be the seat of affection in Biblical times.

2. Some might have doubted the level of Paul’s love toward the Philippian church, that he was “putting on a show”, maybe to get more money out of them or for some other

shady reason. But Paul knew his love toward the Philippians was genuine and he calls God as his witness to it.

**1:9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;**

**1:10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;**

**1:11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.**

### **III. Paul's Prayer List for the Philippians 1:9-11**

#### **A. Paul's 5 prayer requests of the Philippians in 1:9-11:**

1. For increased love in knowledge and judgment
2. For approving those things that are excellent. These are listed in Philippians 4 and in 1 Corinthians 13.
3. To be sincere to the end, which would be until the end of their lives
4. To be without offence to the Day of Christ. To be sincere and without offence is the goal of every Christian when he stands at the judgment.
5. That they would be filled with the fruits of righteousness

#### **B. 1:9 "love"**

1. Strong's #26 agapê; brotherly love, affection, good will, love, benevolence, love feasts.
2. This is divine love, a love with no human or emotional or selfish basis for it, but a love that is exercised simply on the basis of love itself, one who loves because it is his nature to love.

#### **C. 1:9 "abound"**

1. Strong's #4052 perisseuô; to exceed a fixed number of measure, to be left over and above a certain number or measure. "Abounding" is used of a flower going from a bud to full bloom.
2. Love must grow but it must grow and be controlled by two areas:
  - a. In knowledge. Love is a rational thing, as it has a reason, a purpose, a motivation.
  - b. In judgment. We must love the right people and the right things for the right reasons.
  - c. America has been promoting "love" without "knowledge" or "judgment" since the early days of the 20th century, which accounts for the pornography and the homosexuality and the high divorce rates of today.

#### **D. 1:9 "knowledge"**

1. Strong's #1922 epignôsis, from epi (Strong's #1909) an intensive; and ginôskô (Strong's #1097) knowledge; precise and correct knowledge, used in the New Testament of the knowledge of things ethical and divine.
  - a. The epi- prefix brings out the full force of the word.
  - b. Scientific knowledge, an orderly and comprehensive acquaintance with something.

#### **E. 1:9 "judgment"**

1. Strong's #144 aesthêsis; perception, not only by the senses but by the intellect, cognition, discernment, of moral discernment in ethical matters. Frequent in classical Greek for perception by the bodily senses. Used only here in the New Testament.

#### **F. 1:10 "approve"**

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1. Strong's #1381 dokimazō; to test, examine, prove, scrutinize (to see whether a thing is genuine or not), as metals, to recognize as genuine after examination, to approve, deem worthy.

a. This is an approval after intense examination to determine the purity and worth of a thing, only accepting it after its genuineness has been validated. The verb was used for testing the quality and purity of metals.

### **G. 1:10 “excellent”**

1. Be discerning and be able to tell the difference between the good and the bad, the right and the wrong, the helpful and the harmful. Spiritual discernment, provided by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, is called for. This involves being able to discriminate between the good and the bad in everything, moral, spiritually and secularly.

2. Most of us approve those things as Christians that are “okay” or at least are “acceptable” or “tolerable”. But Christians should always be looking for those things in his life that are better than “okay” or “acceptable”, but that are excellent. Only the best for the Lord! Our clothing standards should be better than “acceptable”. A NKJV or ESV (or any modern version)\_might be okay as they agree about 90-95% of the time with the Authorized Version but why not use an excellent English translation such as the Authorized Version that is 100% pure? Your church may preach some gospel but why not insist on a church that was truly a Bible-believing and preaching church? Does the music you listen to “pass” as Christian (such as Southern Gospel or CCM?)? Why not listen to music that is truly Christian?

### **H. 1:10 “sincere”**

1. Examined in the sunlight and found pure. Not hypocritical, which should be second nature for a Christian. Be honest, pure, transparent, not a “put on” in trying to pretend that you are what you really are not just to impress someone.

2. “Our word sincerity is from the Latin sinceritas, which is compounded of sine, without, and cera, wax, and is a metaphor taken from clarified honey; for the mel sincerum, pure or clarified honey, is that which is sine cera, without wax, no part of the comb being left in it. Sincerity, taken in its full meaning, is a word of the most extensive import; and, when applied in reference to the state of the soul, is as strong as the word perfection itself. The soul that is sincere is the soul that is without sin (Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*).”

3. “In Paul's day if an unscrupulous sculptor carved too deeply into the marble, he would put wax in the cut to hide his mistake. Since the wax looked like marble, the craftsman could deceive his customer until the statue was "tested by sunlight." The hot Mediterranean sun would soon melt the wax and the customer would discover (too late to get his money back) that his statue was not "of unmixed substance." So wise customers learned to write "without wax" into their contracts to purchase marble sculptures. They demanded that the workmanship be sincere. We are to be "without wax." We are to live without offense, without stumbling. If we want to walk without stumbling, we must pay attention to where we are going, where we put our feet. Inattention will cause us to stumble even when the path before us looks smooth and plain because we are living in a world that has been deliberately booby-trapped by Satan. We are journeying through a minefield in which Satan has laid his snares. The only safety is in walking where Jesus walked, planting our feet in His footsteps. He walked through this world and He never stumbled. He knows the right way (John Phillips, *Exploring Philippians*).”

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4. "There is no more desirable appellation that can be given to a man than to say that he is sincere - a sincere friend, benefactor, Christian; and there is nothing more lovely in the character of a Christian than sincerity. It implies:
  - a. That he is truly converted - that he has not assumed Christianity as a mask;
  - b. That his motives are disinterested and pure;
  - c. That his conduct is free from double-dealing, trick, and cunning;
  - d. That his words express the real sentiments of his heart;
  - e. That he is true to his word, and faithful to his promises; and,
  - f. That he is always what he professes to be. A sincere Christian would bear to have the light let in upon him always; to have the emotions of his heart seen; to be scanned everywhere, and at all times, by people, by angels, and by God. (Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament*)."
5. Since we have "the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:16), we should approve those things that He would approve of and reject those things that He would reject.
6. "Sincere" only occurs here and in 1 Peter 2:2 where Peter describes the Bible as being "sincere milk". Other variations of the word are:
  - a. Sincerely
    - i. Judges 9:16,19 in the motives of the people in making Abimelech king.
    - ii. Paul uses it in Philippians 1:16 in complaining about men who do not preach the word "sincerely".
  - b. Sincerity
    - i. We are to serve the Lord in sincerity- Joshua 24:14.
    - ii. The testimony of our conscience should be in sincerity- 2 Corinthians 1:12.
7. The sincerity of Christian love in 2 Corinthians 8:8 and Ephesians 6:24.
8. We are to show ourselves to be sincere by our works in Titus 2:7.

### **I. 1:10 "without offense"**

1. We cannot live perfect (sinless) but we can live "blameless" and without offense in making some other Christian stumble. When we are living with offense, we can discourage the brethren (Numbers 21:4; 32:9), and put a stumbling block before an unsaved person so that they end not accepting the gospel because of some stupid thing we said or did. If we were ever guilty of being such an offense, it would be better for us to have a millstone wrapped around our neck and be dropped into the sea (Matthew 18:6).
2. Strong's #677 aproskopos; from a (Strong's #1) a negative particle; and a presumed derivative of proskoptô (Strong's #4350) stumble, strike against; having nothing to strike against, not causing to stumble, not leading others to sin by one's mode of life, not striking against or stumbling, not led into sin, blameless, without offense, not troubled by a consciousness of sin.
3. "Sincere and without offence" is the desired condition of the Christian at the Judgment Seat of Christ. This is Christian character. It is having a good public testimony as a Christian, with nothing in the life to cause offense. Certainly, no Christian wishes to be a stumbling-block to another saint or to a sinner being saved. Some people are going to be offended regardless of the life you lead or what you say. The earthly life of Jesus was perfect, yet He still caused offense. Paul speaks of unnecessary offenses against reasonable people that could- and ought- to be avoided.

### **J. 1:10 "approve"**

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1. Strong's #1506 heilikrinês; from heilê (the sun's ray); and krinô (Strong's #2919) judge; pure, sincere, unsullied, found pure when unfolded and examined by the sun's light, something that has no complications.
  - a. The Greek word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, except in 2 Peter 3:1, where it is rendered "pure."
  - b. The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles have this as "hurt no man's conscience".
2. It is the opposite of doublemindedness, deceit or hypocrisy. Since a doubleminded man is unstable in all his ways (James 1:8), a "sincere" man is a spiritually stable and mature man, a man of Christian consistency.

### **K. Offences:**

1. Christ was a Rock of offence- Isaiah 8:14; Romans 9:33; 1 Peter 2:8.
2. Satan was an offence to Christ in Matthew 16:23.
3. Offences will come but we are to strive to make sure that we are not a cause of offence, especially to a "little one" in Matthew 18:7; Luke 17:1.
4. Paul had a conscience that was "void of offence" before God in Acts 24:16.
5. Christ was raised for our offences in Romans 4:25. "Offence" is also used for "sins" in Romans 5:15-18,20.
6. Eating with offence in Romans 14:20, where the man in question seems to be going out of his way to offend a weaker brother.
7. Mark and separate yourself from those who cause offences in Romans 16:17
7. Give no offence to the Jews, the Gentiles or the Church of God in 1 Corinthians 10:32.
8. Make sure we give no offence in anything that might cause the ministry to be blamed in 2 Corinthians 6:3.
9. There is the offence of the cross in Galatians 5:11, where the cross cannot help but offend certain people.

### **L. 1:11 "fruits of righteousness"**

1. "righteousness" Strong's #1343 dikaiosunê; in a broad sense: state of him who is as he ought to be, righteousness, the condition acceptable to God, the doctrine concerning the way in which man may attain a state approved of God, integrity, virtue, purity of life, rightness, correctness of thinking, feeling, and acting 11b These "fruits of righteousness" only come by Jesus Christ and not by human works in themselves, as fallen man has no such fruits nor can he manifest them without divine aid.
2. Similar to the fruit of the Spirit of Galatians 6? Except here, "fruits" is plural where "fruit" in Galatians 6 is singular.
3. "Fruits of righteousness" also appears in Proverbs 11:30; Amos 6:12 and James 3:18.

### **M. 1:11 "praise of God"**

1. The ultimate motivation for everything that God does and what it should be for everything that we do. If it is for the praise of man, for self, for "the ministry", for the church, for the denomination or fellowship, then it is idolatrous and amounts to nothing at the Judgment Seat of Christ. As Robert Murray McCheyne said, "All for Christ's sake; all else is unworthy."

**1:12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;**

**1:13 So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places;**

**1:14 And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.**

**1:15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:**



**1:16 The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:**

**1:17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.**

**1:18 What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.**

**IV. Paul's Afflictions Promote the Gospel 1:12-18**

A. 1:12 The Philippians probably had feared that his imprisonment would hinder the spread of the Gospel and were expecting bad news. Paul removes this fear by explaining the spiritual good that had come about as a result of this seeming set-back.

**B. 1:12 "furtherance of the gospel"**

1. This would include the accusations against him, and his imprisonment at Rome and other related persecutions. He had been falsely accused, and had been constrained to appeal to Caesar, and had been taken to Rome as a prisoner (Acts 25–28). This arrest and imprisonment would seem to have been against his success as a preacher; but he now says that the contrary had been the fact. It's all been for the best since it was all in the will of God for Paul's life and ministry! Paul had been through a lot as an apostle in his ministry and service to God. Yet it all had worked out for the best, for the furtherance and advancement of the gospel. If the gospel could be advanced, people saved and God glorified, then Paul didn't mind suffering and gladly took whenever the devil threw at him or whatever God allowed into his life. And if it was within the will of God, Paul would be doing more spiritual good and the gospel would be advanced more with Paul "on ice" than if he was on the loose.

2. Suffering is that one thing that advances the gospel better and faster than anything else. We put all the credit on our evangelistic programs or our missionary programs or our preaching, but such human efforts do not advance the gospel. They may advance a personality cult and build up the "numbers" that can be bragged about, but that is not the same thing as advancing the gospel. The gospel never advanced faster and stronger than in the days of the martyrs, when the blood flowed like water and when people were suffering greatly to stand for Christ. The blood of the martyrs is indeed the seed of the church. But times of prosperity weaken the gospel and retards its advance, just like today in the West. We are at ease in Zion and the church is weak, decayed, corrupt and apostate. But go to China or an Islamic country and you will see a strong church that probably has a very effective outreach.

3. We are to "endure" suffering as a good soldier of Christ (2 Timothy 2:3) and we are to be partakers of His sufferings (2 Timothy 1:8). Paul was to suffer for His name's sake (Acts 9:16).

**C. 1:13 "palace"**

1. Strong's #4232 *praitōrion*; of Latin origin; "head-quarters" in a Roman camp, the tent of the commander-in-chief, the palace in which the governor or procurator of a province resided, to which use the Romans were accustomed to appropriate the palaces already existing, and formerly dwelt in by kings or princes; at Jerusalem it was a magnificent palace which Herod the Great had built for himself, and which the Roman procurators seemed to have occupied whenever they came from Caesarea to Jerusalem to transact public business, the camp of the Praetorian soldiers established by Tiberius.

2. Paul's confinement was news in Caesar's household and he was the "talk of the town". No doubt Paul had been able to win some in the imperial household, or at least his testimony and witness had made inroads into Caesar's circles. Some commentators

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would translate “palace” here as “the whole imperial or “Praetorian Guard” which is almost the same idea as “Caesar’s household”.

a. See similar language in Philippians 4:22.

3. The spiritual fruit of Paul’s imprisonment and suffering was manifest, even in Caesar’s household, as the gospel had penetrated even to there and there were Christians there. One man’s suffering, for righteousness’ sake, can have a great and eternal impact! We would probably never of had the letters to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and to Philemon if Satan hadn’t of thrown Paul in jail. Take Paul out of circulation and he simply ends up writing Scripture instead of preaching! People (both in the church and without) were coming to understand that Paul was not in prison for any political or social crimes that he may have committed, but rather for the gospel he preached and the ministry he undertook.

4. “Notice the beautiful self-forgetfulness of the apostle Paul. So long as the gospel could be more widely published, he did not mind where he was, or what he suffered. He was able to witness for Christ among the Praetorian guards, who had the charge of the prison where he was confined, and who also, in their turn, were on duty in Caesar’s palace; so Paul says that, through his being in bonds there, the particulars concerning his imprisonment were talked about even in the imperial palace, and by that means the gospel was made known to many in Caesar’s household. Then, in addition, other brethren, who might perhaps have felt compelled to be quiet in his presence, finding that their leader was removed from them, waxed confident to come out and” speak the word without fear.” The same sort of thing has often happened since. You have sometimes seen a widely spreading oak tree cut down, and you have missed its grateful shadow; yet, afterwards, you have discovered that many little trees, which would have, been dwarfed beneath its shade, have grown more rapidly in its absence; and, in like manner, the removal of some eminent servant of the Lord Jesus Christ has frequently made room for others to spring up, and more than fill his place (Charles Spurgeon).”

### **D. 1:14 “word”**

1. Strong’s #3056 logos; a word, uttered by a living voice, embodies a conception or idea, decree, mandate or order, what is declared, a thought, declaration, aphorism, a weighty saying, a dictum, a maxim, doctrine, teaching, reason, the mental faculty of thinking, meditating, reasoning, calculating.

2. In John, this denotes the essential Word of God, Jesus Christ, the personal wisdom and power in union with God, his minister in creation and government of the universe, the cause of all the world’s life both physical and ethical, which for the procurement of man’s salvation put on human nature in the person of Jesus the Messiah, the second person in the Godhead, and shone forth conspicuously from His words and deeds.

3. This term was familiar to the Jews and in their writings long before a Greek philosopher named Heraclitus used the term Logos around 600 B.C. to designate the divine reason or plan which coordinates a changing universe. This word was well suited to John’s purpose in John 1.

### **E. 1:14 “without fear”**

1. Satan seriously miscalculated. He assumed that by shutting Paul up in prison, the preaching would diminish. Yet with one preacher out of the way, God raised up many others to take his place who may have been even bolder than Paul was. This is something Satan has yet to figure out- persecution strengthens the church while prosperity weakens it. Throwing church leaders in jail will only embolden the other preachers on the outside to “pick up the slack”. This only shows how stupid Satan is. You would think that he would have learned that he cannot destroy the Church by

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persecution, nor can he discourage a true saint of God by trial and trouble. Yet he keeps on merrily in his program that has proven to be a failure.

2. One result of Paul's imprisonment was that it emboldened the disciples. They took heart and courage by seeing Paul in jail and that made them preach all the harder. See! Satan knocks out one preacher, but God raises up two more that are even bolder than Paul! This is a constant theme in Scripture. When God's people suffer, Satan thinks he gains an advantage, but the opposite is true. Consider the following examples:

- a. Joseph- cast into a pit, sold into Egyptian slavery, falsely accused, thrown in jail, but all for the purpose of him being elevated to the throne and preserving his brethren in a time of famine.
- b. Moses- exiled from Egypt after his murder, but it serves as a 40-year training period for his future leadership of Israel.
- c. Job- he loses his sons, wife and wealth under the hand of Satan but emerges stronger and richer in the end and we receive the Book of Job to help us in our sufferings.
- d. Jesus hangs on the cross and Satan thinks he has won. But he knew better three days later!
- e. Peter's failures in his denials of Christ break him of self-will and pride, thus fitting him for leadership in the early church.
- f. The Imperial Church- every time Satan attacks it through the Roman emperors, it grows the faster.
- g. John, exiled on Patmos, receives the Revelation and pens this last book of the Scripture.

### **F. 1:15 “preach”**

1. Strong's #2784 *kerussô*; to be a herald, to officiate as a herald, always with the suggestion of formality, gravity and an authority which must be listened to and obeyed, used of the public proclamation of the gospel and matters pertaining to it, made by John the Baptist, by Jesus, by the apostles and other Christian teachers.

2. This is a different word from “preach” in 1:16.

### **G. 1:15 “envy and strife”**

1. Some were motivated by envy of Paul's success in his preaching and by his influence, and not motivated by the glory of God. This would involve the Judaizers and others of Paul opponents.

2. Not everyone who preaches the gospel does so from good intentions. There is a lot of preaching done for selfish purposes or any other non-spiritual reasons. Some preach for no other reason than to cause trouble or to “stir the pot”. Unfortunately, there is little we can do about it. Even Paul could not control it. All we can basically do is to pray for God to minimize the damage.

3. The motivations of the apostates are “envy and strife”, yet the motivation in preaching of the godly man should rather be “burden and compassion”. They are envious of the spiritual success of a faithful godly preacher who has refused to compromise. That envy motivates him to preach in an attitude of contention, to build up himself through his own human efforts, to counter the divine blessing that the godly man has, something the apostate man cannot know or enjoy.

### **H. 1:16 “preach”**

1. Strong's #2605 *kataggellô*; from *kata* (Strong's #2596) down, through; and *aggelos* (Strong's #32) messenger; to announce, declare, promulgate, make known, to proclaim publicly, publish, to denounce, report, betray.

2. A different word from “preach” in 1:15.

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### **I. 1:16 “contention”**

1. Strong's #2052 eritheia; electioneering or intriguing for office, in the New Testament a courting distinction, a desire to put one's self forward, a partisan and fractious spirit which does not disdain low arts.
2. This word is found before New Testament times only in Aristotle where it denotes a self-seeking pursuit of political office by unfair means. Paul exhorts to be one in the mind of Christ not putting self forward or being selfish (Philippians 2:3).
3. James 3:14 speaks against having selfishness or self-promotion in your heart.
4. There is something very sinister about this word. You “preach Christ” in order to promote yourself or to build your own little ecclesiastical empire. This is the fatal flaw in many churches these days- men who preach to build themselves up instead of to minister to the saints or to glorify Christ. And that sort of self-centered, idolatrous preaching always stirs up contention among the faithful.

### **J. 1:16 “sincerely”**

1. Strong's #55 hagnôs, chaste, clean, pure, with sincerity. Preached clearly and honestly, with unmixed motives.
2. Used only here in the New Testament.

### **K. 1:16 “bonds”**

1. Some of the brethren seemed to be taking advantage of Paul's problem and were preaching Christ out of contention. With Paul out of circulation, they were running free, preaching Christ for whatever motivations that possessed them. In doing so, they thought to rub a little salt in Paul's wounds. While the cat's away (or locked up, in this case), the mice do play. That had to bother Paul that he was not able to police these preachers and flex his apostolic authority, but he found good even in this. At least they are preaching! At least the gospel is getting out in some form! If my being in jail will contribute to the spread of the gospel in this manner, then I rejoice anyway! Paul had a real talent for snatching victory from the jaws of defeat like this.

### **L. 1:17 “set”**

1. Paul had not set himself to defend the Gospel but God had appointed him and authorized him to defend the gospel against its enemies.
2. This Greek word is in the “middle/passive” voice- someone else has set Paul to do this- he did not do it himself or on his own volition.
3. This also has the idea of a soldier posted by a superior.

### **M. 1:17 “defense”**

1. Strong's #627 apologia, answer (for self), clearing of self, a legal word meaning a legal defense presented by a lawyer as he defends his client.
2. The gospel of God has many enemies and they are lively and relentless. They will deny the gospel, marginalize the gospel, add to the gospel, subtract from the gospel or change elements of the gospel. Paul is set to defend the pure and unadulterated gospel message he received directly from God.

### **N. 1:17 “the gospel”**

1. What is the gospel? It is defined by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:1-8. That's it- there isn't anything else. No healing, tongues or casting out devils. We dare not add to this definition or subtract from this divine definition of the gospel.
2. What are some of the enemies of the gospel?
  - a. Modernists and liberals
  - b. Cults
  - c. Sects like the Charismatics or Steven Anderson's “New IFB” cult.

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d. Extremist groups like the followers of the *Sword of the Lord* and Jack Hyles (with their easy-believism, lack of repentance, etc).

### **O. 1:18 “pretense”**

1. Strong’s #4392 prophasis; from pro (Strong’s #4253) before; and phainô (Strong’s #5316) bring forth, shine; a pretext (alleged reason, pretended cause), show, under color as though they would do something in pretense, ostensibly.
2. These are the men who preach under a false pretense. They claim “God called them” or “they have a great burden for souls and revival” and make it all sound so spiritual when in reality, they are preaching to line their own pockets and to establish their own personality cult.
3. These are the men who preach from good and honest motives. They are not hypocrites like the “pretense preachers” above are.

### **P. 1:18 “rejoice...”**

1. “rejoice” is a major theme in Philippians.
2. “All things work together for good” could be a paraphrase of this verse. Despite all of Paul’s problems and persecutions, it would eventually work out for the best and for the good of the Gospel.
3. Whether Paul lived or died, Christ would be glorified and the Gospel advanced. Yes, souls may be saved under Binny Hinn or some Seventh-Day Adventist preacher. We do not agree with them, but if God can glorify Himself through a talking jackass (see Balaam’s experience!), then we rejoice if God uses an unorthodox preacher to bring glory to Himself.
4. “Paul knew nothing of personal jealousy or of personal resentment. So long as Jesus Christ was preached, he did not care who received the credit and the prestige. He did not care what other preachers said about him, or how unfriendly they were to him, or how contemptuous they were of him, or how they tried to steal a march upon him. All that mattered was that Christ was preached. All too often we resent it when someone else gains a prominence or a credit which we do not. All too often we regard a man as an enemy because he has expressed some criticism of us or of our methods. All too often we think a man can do no good because he does not do things in our way. All too often the intellectuals have no truck with the evangelicals, and the evangelicals impugn the faith of the intellectuals. All too often those who believe in the evangelism of education have no use for the evangelism of decision, and those who practise the evangelism of decision have no use for those who feel that some other approach will have more lasting effects. Paul is the great example. He lifted the matter beyond all personalities; all that mattered was that Christ was preached (William Barclay, “Philippians, Colossians and Thessalonians” in *The Daily Study Bible*).”
5. “This may furnish valuable lessons to preachers of the gospel now:
  - a. When we are laid aside from preaching by sickness, we should rejoice that others are in health, and are able to make the Savior known, though we are forgotten.
  - b. When we are unpopular and unsuccessful, we should rejoice that others are more popular and successful - for Christ is preached.
  - c. When we have rivals, who have better plans than we for doing good, and whose labors are crowned with success, we should not be envious or jealous - for Christ is preached.
  - d. When ministers of other denominations preach what we regard as error, and their preaching becomes popular, and is attended with success, we can find occasion to rejoice - for they preach Christ. In the error we should not, we cannot

rejoice; but in the fact that the great truth is held up that Christ died for people, we can always find abundant occasion for joy. Mingled as it may be with error, it may be nevertheless the means of saving souls, and though we should rejoice more with error, it may be nevertheless the means of saving souls, and though we should rejoice more if the truth were preached without any admixture of error, yet still the very fact that Christ is made known lays the foundation for gratitude and rejoicing. If all Christians and Christian ministers had the feelings which Paul expresses here, there would be much less envy and uncharitableness than there is now in the churches. May we not hope that the time will yet come when all who preach the gospel will have such supreme regard for the name and work of the Saviour, that they will find sincere joy in the success of a rival denomination, or a rival preacher, or in rival plans for doing good? Then, indeed, contentions would cease, and the hearts of Christians, "like kindred drops," would mingle into one (Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament*).

**1:19 For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,**

**1:20 According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.**

**1:21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.**

**1:22 But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not.**

**V. Paul's Afflictions Exalt the Lord 1:19-22**

**A. 1:19 "salvation"**

1. Or "deliverance" from his present situation and imprisonment in this context, but also the fuller, eventual spiritual meaning.

**B. 1:19 "supply"**

1. Strong's #2024 *epichorêgia*; a supplying, supply. "corhgia is properly the work of a *corhgos*, the 'leader of a chorus'.
2. *Coragos* came to mean the citizen who paid the costs of the performance and *corhgia* meant his bounty. Thence *corhgia* passed on to mean 'supply' in general (H. C. G. Moule, *The Epistle to the Philippians with Introduction and Notes*, page 22)."
3. The *epi-* prefix brings out the full meaning of the word.

**C. 1:20 "expectation"**

1. Strong's # 603 *apokaradokia*; from a comparative of *apo* (Strong's #575) from, of, out of; and a compound of *kara* (the head) and *dokeō* (Strong's #1380) (in the sense of watching) to think, suppose; anxious and persistent expectation. A longing expectation.
2. Only used here and in Romans 8:19.

**D. 1:20 "ashamed"**

1. Strong's #153 *aischunō*; to disfigure, to dishonor, to suffuse with shame, make ashamed, be ashamed.
2. Paul was in a shameful situation in jail. He had been treated shamefully a number of times in his ministry (what preacher hasn't?). But he would not be ashamed when he stood before God at the Judgment Seat. There, Paul would be fully and totally vindicated for all the shame that he suffered and endured for the cause of Christ.

**E. 1:20 "in my body"**

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1. This was Paul's supreme desire and the motivation of his life and ministry- that Christ would be glorified both in and through Paul. Nothing else mattered.
2. Any glory of God that matters in this life must have some physical manifestation in order for us to see it and appreciate it.

### **F. 1:20 "death"**

1. It made no difference to Paul. If he lived, then he would glorify God through his life and ministry. If he died, then his death (and martyrdom) would also glorify God. Either way, Paul was determined that God would get the glory.
2. "Again I bid you remark Paul's devotion and self-forgetfulness. It seems to be a matter of no choice with him whether he serves God in life or glorifies him in death. The emblem of the American Baptist Missionary Union is an ox standing between a plough and an altar, with the motto, "Ready for either,"—Ready to spend and be spent in labor, or to be a sacrifice, whichever the Lord pleases (Charles Spurgeon)."

### **G. 1:21 "me"**

1. Emphatic. "Whatever life is or mean to others, here is what it means to **me**..."

### **H. 1:21 "to live"**

1. "My sole aim in living is to glorify Christ. He is the supreme End of my life, and I value it only as being devoted to his honor – Philip Doddridge. His aim was not honor, learning, gold, pleasure; it was, to glorify the Lord Jesus. This was the single purpose of his soul - a purpose to which he devoted himself with as much singleness and ardor as ever did a miser to the pursuit of gold, or a devotee of pleasure to amusement, or an aspirant for fame to ambition. This implied the following things:
  - a. A purpose to know as much of Christ as it was possible to know - to become as fully acquainted as he could with his rank, his character, his plans, with the relations which he sustained to the Father, and with the claims and influences of his religion; see Philippians 3:10; Ephesians 3:19; compare John 17:3.
  - b. A purpose to imitate Christ - to make him the model of his life. It was a design that his Spirit should reign in his heart, that the same temper should actuate him, and that the same great end should be constantly had in view.
  - c. A purpose to make his religion known, as far as possible, among mankind. To this, Paul seriously gave his life, and devoted his great talents. His aim was to see on how many minds he could impress the sentiments of the Christian religion; to see to how many of the human family he could make Christ known, to whom he was unknown before. Never was there a man who gave himself with more ardor to any enterprise, than Paul did to this; and never was one more successful, in any undertaking, than he was in this.
  - d. It was a purpose to enjoy Christ. He drew his comforts from him. His happiness he found in communion with him. It was not in the works of art; not in the pursuits of elegant literature; not in the frivolous and fashionable world; but it was in communion with the Savior, and in endeavoring to please him.
  - e. Remarks On Philippians 1:21
    - i. Paul never had occasion to regret this course. It produced no sadness when he looked over his life. He never felt that he had had an unworthy aim of living; he did not wish that his purpose had been different when he came to die.
    - ii. If it was Paul's duty thus to live, it is no less that of every Christian. Iii. What was there in his case that made it his duty to "live unto Christ," which does not exist in the case of every sincere Christian on earth? No believer, when he comes to die, will regret that he has lived unto Christ;

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but how many, alas, regret that this has not been the aim and purpose of their souls! (Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament*.)”

2. But Paul! So far, living for Christ has only brought you grief and trouble! You have been stoned, shipwrecked, beaten with rods, whipped, been the object of an assassination plot, arrested, lied about, slandered, and so on. And for what? You are a prisoner of Rome. You have no money and few earthly goods. You have no wife and children. You have no retirement account. You have no home. Is living for Christ worth all of this? If you were to ask this of Paul, you know exactly how he would respond!

### I. 1:21 “die”

1. Death held no terror for Paul. He was ready to embrace it when it came. Why should Christians fear it when it is nothing more than the vehicle to transport us from this plane of sin and suffering to a dimension where all is holiness, joy and light? A bus may take you from one point to another yet one has no reason to fear the bus- it is only the vehicle used to get you to your desired destination. So it is with death. Why wouldn't it be gain to die? Through death, we are delivered from this plane of sin and suffering and are transported to an eternal plane where God dwells and where all is holiness and goodness. Our sufferings, trials, temptations, sadnesses, diseases and disappointments are all left behind at death, never to be endured by the Christian again.

2. What is the Christian delivered from at death?

a. We are freed from sin. Here it is the source of perpetual humiliation and sorrow. In heaven sin will be no more.

b. We are freed from doubts about our spiritual condition. Even the strongest Christian is liable to doubts about his personal piety, and often experience many an anxious hour to this point. In heaven, doubt will be known no more.

c. We are freed from temptation. Here, no one knows when he may be tempted, nor how powerful the temptation may be. In heaven, there will be no allurements to lead him astray; no artful, cunning, and skillful designs of pleasure to place inducements before him to sin; and no heart to yield to them. Opportunities, desires and occasions to sin are no more in heaven.

d. We are delivered from all his enemies, including Satan. Here the Christian is constantly liable to have his motives called in question, or to be met with detraction and slander. In heaven, there will be none to do him injustice; all will rejoice in the belief that he is pure. No one will seek to do us harm or ill, or ruin our walk and testimony.

e. We are delivered from suffering. Here, we are constantly liable to it. Health fails, friends die, the mind is sad. In heaven, there shall be no separation of friends, no sickness, no sadness, no disappointments, no loneliness and no tears.

f. We are delivered from death. Here, death is always near - dreadful, alarming, terrible to us. In heaven, death will be known no more. No face will ever turn pale, and no knees tremble at his approach. In heaven there will never be seen a funeral procession, nor will the soil there ever open its bosom to furnish a grave.

g. To all this may be added the fact, that in heaven, the Christian will be surrounded by his best friends; that he will be reunited with those whom he loved on earth; that he will be associated with the angels; and that he will be admitted to the immediate presence of his Savior and his God! Why, then, should a Christian be afraid to die? And why should he not hail that hour, when it comes, as the hour of his deliverance, and rejoice that he is going home? Does the prisoner, long confined in a dungeon, dread the hour which is to open his prison,



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and permit him to return to his family and friends? Does the man in a foreign land, long an exile, dread the hour when he shall embark on the ocean to be conveyed where he may embrace the friends of his youth? Does the sick man dread the hour which restores him to health; the afflicted, the hour of comfort? the wanderer at night, the cheering light of returning day? And why then should the Christian dread the hour which will restore him to immortal rigor; which shall remove all his sorrows; which shall introduce him to everlasting day? (Adam Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament*)

### 3. The Christian and death:

- a. A dead Christian is in a better state than a live one.
- b. He is not unconscious; he is living with Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:9,10).
- c. He does not go into the "grave", in spite of Russell and Rutherford's (the founders of the Jehovah Witness cults) insane perversions of the truth.
- d. He is "absent from the body" and "present with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:1-12).
- e. He is "with Christ" (Philippians 1:23).
- f. His death is "gain" (Philippians 1:21).
- g. The Bible-believing Christian knows where he is going at death (1 John 5:13), and he knows the direction and the distance that he will travel (Ephesians 3:18) and what is awaiting him at his destination (Colossians 3:1-3). (Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on Galatians-Colossians*, page 376).

### J. 1:21 "gain"

1. "You think you see Paul land on the shores of Philippi. There by the river side were ships gathered and many merchant men. There you would see the merchant busy with his ledger and overlooking his cargo and he paused and put his hand on his brow, and said as he gripped his money bag 'For me to live is gold'. And there you see his humbler clerk, employed in some plainer work, toiling for his master...and he mutters between his teeth 'For me to live is to gain a bare subsistence.' And there stands one...with a studious face...with a roll full of the mysterious characters of wisdom. 'Young man,' he says, 'for me to live is learning.' 'Aha!' says another...clothed in mail with a helmet on his head, 'I scorn your modes of life; for me to live is glory.' But there walks one, a humble tent-maker, called Paul...he steps in the middle of them all and says 'For me to live is Christ.' Oh, how they smile with contempt upon him...The learned man stopped and said 'Christ! Who is He? Is He that foolish, mad fellow of whom I have heard, who was executed upon Calvary for sedition?'...'What?' says the Roman soldier, 'and do you live for a man who died a slave's death? What glory will you get by fighting His battles?' 'What profit is there in your preaching?' chimes in the trader. Ah! and even the merchant's clerk thought Paul mad; for he said 'How can he feed his family? How will he supply his wants if all he liveth for is to honor Christ?' Ay, but Paul knew where he was at. He was the wiser man of them all (Charles Spurgeon, "The Good Man's Life and Death" in *The New Park Street Pulpit*, 3:311, sermon #146-7)."

2. Any religion that glorifies this life and this earth over eternal life and heaven is a false religion. Any religion in which its members would rather live in a corrupted body of sin on a sin-cursed planet than in a glorified body in heaven is a false religion. Any religion that seeks gain and glory from this life is a false religion. Any religion that uses its money to build impressive buildings and organizations here on earth is a false religion. True religion rejects this life and planet and seeks an eternal city, whose Builder and Maker is God. For the true Christian, death is better than life because death is our transport to God and glory.

**K. 1:22 “wot not”**

1. Old English present indicative for “I know not”.
2. Strong’s #1107 γνώριος; to make known, to know, to gain knowledge of, have thorough knowledge of, in earlier Greek it means “to gain a knowledge of” or “have thorough knowledge of”.

**1:23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:**

**1:24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.**

**1:25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;**

**1:26 That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.**

**VI. Paul's Two Desires 1:23-26**

**A. 1:23 “strait”**

1. Strong’s #4912 σunechô; from sun (Strong’s #4862) with; and echô (Strong’s #2192) to have; to hold together with constraint, to compress, of a strait, that forces a ship into a narrow channel, of a cattle squeeze, that pushing in on each side, forcing the beast into a position where it cannot move so the farmer can administer medication

**B. 1:23 “desire”**

1. Strong’s #1939 ἐπιθυμία; desire, craving, longing, desire for what is forbidden, lust.
2. The word is obviously not used in a bad sense here.
3. The “epi-“ prefix intensifies the word. Paul had a very strong and passionate desire in this case.

**C. 1:23 “depart”**

1. “Let me describe what I think the apostle means by the figure of a departure. Many deaths are preceded by a long season of sickness, and then I think we might picture them by the departure of a ship from its moorings. There lies the ship in its haven. there is a friend of yours about to journey away to some distant clime. You will never see his face again in the flesh. He is going to emigrate; he will find a home in another and he hopes, a happier land. You stand upon the shore; you have given him the last embrace. The mother has given to her son the last kiss, the friend has shaken him by the hand for the last time, and now the signal is given; the anchor is taken up; the rope which held the ship to the shore is loosed, and lo, the ship is moving and she floats outward towards the sea. You look, you still wave your hand as you see the ship departing. Your friend stands on some prominent spot on the deck, and there he waves his handkerchief to the last. But the most sharp-sighted of friends in such scenes must lose sight of one another. The ship floats on; you just now catch a sight of the sails, but with the strongest telescope you cannot discover your friend. He is gone: it is his departure. Weep as you may, you cannot bring him back again. Your sorrowful tears may mingle with the flood that has carried him away, but they cannot entice a single wave to restore him to you. Now even so is the death of many a believer. His ship is quietly moored in its haven. He is calmly lying upon his bed. You visit him in his chamber. Without perturbation of spirit he bids you farewell. His grip is just as hearty as he shakes your hand, as ever it was in the best hour of his health. His voice is still firm, and his eye is still bright. He tells you he is going to another and a better land...He bide you a last farewell. You see him for a little season even after that, although he is too far gone again to address you. It may be a partial insensibility seizes hold of him; he is like a ship that is just going out of sight; you

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look at his lips, and as you bow down your ear, you can catch some faint syllables of praise. He is talking to himself of that precious Jesus who is still his joy and hope. You watch him till the last heaving breath has left the body, and you retire with the sweet reflection that his Spirit on a glassy sea has floated joyously to its post. Thus, the believer's death is a departure. There is no sinking in the wave; there is no destruction of the vessel: it is a departure. He has gone; he has sailed over a calm and quiet sea, and he is gone to a better land (Charles Spurgeon, "Paul's Desire to Depart" in *New Park Street Pulpit*, volume 5, pages 675-676)."

D. Paul wanted to depart and go on to heaven, but he knew his work was not finished and that he needed to remain behind and continue his ministry because it was more needful for the brethren (1:24). If Paul was writing about himself in 2 Corinthians 12:2-4/Acts 14:19, then saw a vision of heaven and that ruined him for the rest of his life. After seeing glory, he was "forced" to come back to the footstool and continue through all the toil, pain and problems. From that day on, Paul lived with that vision in view, and didn't care if he was killed since he knew and saw where he was going!

1. "depart and be with Christ" Jesus had to be alive for this desire to make any sense. If Jesus was still dead in the grave, why would Paul desire to go and be with Him? This also makes no sense if soul-sleep was a true doctrine, which it is not. Depart and go to sleep in the grave for 1900 years (and counting)? Is that desirable? Why would Paul want that? Soul-sleep is an unbiblical doctrine that cannot be supported by Scripture.
2. This is the Christian's dilemma. We want to go to heaven, but we also want to stay on earth and preach and serve. Every preacher understands this. He wants both options but only one can be fulfilled at a time. We hope that God will give us a good long life, so we can invest 50 or 60 years in preaching and teaching the Scripture. A short life means a short ministry- horrors for the God-called preacher! Paul understood that he was needed here on earth. The Philippians needed him to continue to minister to them. If Paul were to die and leave them, what would they do? As long as Paul was left among them by the Lord, he was sure that he would have a useful, beneficial and joyous ministry. Paul wanted to go home but the Philippians needed him too much, so Paul was willing to be unselfish and remain a while longer.

### E. 1:23 "far better"

1. Heaven is, of course, far better than anything here on the Footstool! The only thing that makes life on earth bearable for the Christian is the hope that he can serve and glorify God while here and that there is a glorious heaven waiting afterwards! If all we had was hope in this life and if this was all there was, then we, of all men, would indeed be most miserable.
2. The opposite is true for the sinner. For him, to remain on this earth is far better than what awaits him after death.
3. "And you will remark the apostle does not call it an arrest. In the death of the wicked, the sheriff's officer of justice doth lay his clay-cold hand upon the man's shoulder, and he is his prisoner forever. The sergeant-at-arms in the name of the justice which has been incensed, puts the fetters about his wrists, and conducts him to the prison-house of despair and everlasting torment. In the Christian's case, however, there is no such thing as an arrest, for there is no one that can arrest him (Charles Spurgeon, "Paul's Desire to Depart" in *New Park Street Pulpit*, volume 5, page 674)."
4. This shows the doctrine of "soul sleep" is false. This teaching is that at death, we go unconscious until the resurrection. If that was so, Paul has been unconscious in the grave for almost 2000 years. Who would look forward to that? Paul believed that absent from the body was to be present with the Lord for the saint.

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1. The account of the Rich Man and Lazarus in Luke 16 also illustrates this. Both men died but neither man was unconscious. One was aware in hell, the other was aware in Abraham's Bosom.
2. When the witch of Endor brought up the spirit of Samuel, it is obvious that he was not asleep at that time (1 Samuel 28).
3. Paul mentions a man (possibly himself" who was caught up to the third heaven and saw things. He was not asleep after his temporary death (2 Corinthians 12:4).

### F. 1:25 "know"

1. Greek perfect tense. Paul was unwavering in this belief and had full assurance of it.
- G. 1:26 Paul mentions his hopeful second visit to them, after his release from his current Rome imprisonment.

**1:27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;**

**1:28 And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.**

**1:29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;**

**1:30 Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear *to be* in me.**

## **VII. Paul's Exhortation to the Philippians 1:27-30**

### A. 1:27 "conversation"

1. Strong's #4176 politeuomai; to be a citizen, to administer civil affairs, manage the state, to avail one's self of or recognize the laws.
  - a. This word is only used twice, here and in Acts 23:1.
2. The word "polis", for city, derives from this, as do our words "politics" and "political", referring to the public duties and responsibilities required of a man in public office. Do your duty! Live and conduct yourself as citizens of heaven, just as a Roman citizen would conduct himself as a Roman should. Philippi was a Roman colony with many Roman citizens who would have taken pride in the fact that they were Romans and that would have acted like it. If a Roman could take such pride in his station and conduct his life accordingly, why cannot a Christian, who has a nobler name and a higher calling, surpass the Roman in the nobility of his conduct?
3. The Philippians were proud of their Roman-ness, their link to Rome and the citizenship and were fiercely loyal to Rome. They were a Roman colony placed within an alien environment and their lives and conduct reflected that to the non-Romans around them. Paul points to that as the example as how Christians should be conducting themselves to a lost and fallen world all about them. The Philippians maintained their Roman customs, language, dress, titles, customs and affairs and refused to compromise them in the world around them. They totally rejected the influence of the world around them. Christians should do no less than the Roman Philippians.
4. Do your duty as citizens of Heaven and conduct your life accordingly! The Romans at Philippi may have been citizens of the Roman Empire, but Christians were citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven.
5. A man who truly believes the gospel will certainly act like it. Belief does alter the conduct of life.

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### **B. 1:27 “becometh”**

1. Strong’s # 516 axiōs; suitably, worthily, in a manner worthy of.
2. This has the idea of a manner of life that honors the gospel.

### **C. 1:27 “stand fast”**

1. A military idea, to stand your ground in the face of an enemy attack and have a determination not to yield once inch of ground. There are many enemies that would seek to occupy the spiritual ground you possess.

### **D. 1:27 “one mind”**

1. Literally, “with one soul”, as Tyndale, Coverdale and Bishops Bibles translated it.

### **E. 1:27 “striving together”**

1. Strong’s #4866 sunathleō; from sun (Strong’s #4862) with; and athleō (Strong’s #118) strive, engage in combat; to strive at the same time with another.
2. Both Paul and the Philippians were co-laborers together, working for the same Master and to the same end, bound by a common loyalty and goal. It involved teamwork and striving to reach a common goal.
3. Think of any sports team. The only way they win is when all the members are working together in harmony, following the same game plan.

### **F. 1:28 “terrified”**

1. Strong’s #4426 pturō; to frighten, affright, as the idea of the terror of a startled horse.
2. Used only here in the New Testament.

### **G. 1:28 “adversaries”**

1. The Philippians obviously had their enemies and persecutors. Our enemies usually roar and bellow in an attempt to intimidate us to compromise but they are rarely able to carry out their threats.

### **H. 1:28 “token of perdition”**

1. God has their number and will fix them in the end, don't you worry about that! You are to serve God without considering what your enemies may say or do. Satan is the most powerful adversary, but he has already been defeated by Christ on the cross. He is also on a short leash and can do nothing that God does not allow him to do. If Satan is thus controlled and defeated, how much more his devils and men under his employ? Perdition and absolute judgment await them.

### **I. 1:29 Suffering:**

1. “All heathen adversaries of the gospel think that when a Christian suffers, it is because he is cursed of God and heading for perdition (Job 2:9).
2. Nearly all Christians who suffer- while being ridiculed by the lost- tend to lose their courage and at times they become terrified with the thought that God has abandoned them (Lamentations 3:18-40).
3. Paul is encouraging the Philippians to go right on with it and ignore the suffering (as he had to- Philippians 1:12,18; Acts 16:28-30) and accept the suffering (1 Peter 2:19) as a sign of God’s blessing (Luke 6:22) and as evidence that they are saved (Hebrews 12:4-8) even though their adversaries accept the same token (John 9:2) as proof that they are lost.
  - a. David’s troubles- caused by his adversary (2 Samuel 12,13)- are proof to the adversary that David is damned (2 Samuel 16:8).
  - b. Job’s troubles- caused by his adversary (Job 1,2)- are proof to his wife that he is damned (Job 2:9).
  - c. The Blind Man’s troubles (John 9) were proof to the disciples that he or his parents had something to do with perdition (John 9:2).
  - d. But above all! Jesus Christ’s sufferings under His adversaries (Psalm 22:1-15)

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was an evident token to them that He was “cursed of God” and a blasphemer headed for hell (John 8:13) who should be stoned (John 8:59). (Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer’s Commentary on Galatians-Colossians* pages 382-383).”

5. The Greek word for "suffer" here is Strong's #3958 "paschô" from where we get our word "paschal lamb" with reference to the suffering sacrifice of Christ. In our persecutions, we suffer as a sacrifice that is acceptable unto God. Our suffering is a ministry unto God and it can be thought of as a form of sacrifice, a sweet-smelling savor as we suffer for righteousness sake. And a suffering-free Christianity is really no Christianity at all.

6. What a high privilege and a glorious ministry is the ministry of suffering! Nobody wants to go through it, though. The old saying rings true, “Everyone wants to go to heaven but no one wants to die”. God often honors His highest saints with suffering! This is how God builds character. If you find yourself continually in hot water, the Lord must be trying to do something wonderful and deep in your life and He must have grand plans for your life and ministry!

### **J. 1:30 “conflict”**

1. Strong’s #73 agôn; an assembly, especially an assembly met to see games, the assembly of the Greeks at their national games, hence the contest for a prize at their games, any struggle or contest, a battle, an action at law, trial.

2. The word (originally meaning “a gathering”, as at the Greek sports) has an athletic idea about it. We get our word “agony” from here.

**Philippians Chapter 2**

Philippians 2 deals with humility in Christian service and ministry, both on our part and even on Christ's.

- 2:1 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,**  
**2:2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.**  
**2:3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.**  
**2:4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.**

**VIII. Exhortation to Humility 2:1-4**

**A. 2:1 "If there be"**

1. "The **εἰ**, if, does not express any doubt here, but on the contrary is to be considered as a strong affirmation; as there is consolation in Christ, as there is comfort of love, etc. (Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*)."
2. "Paul uses four conditions in this verse, all of the first class, assuming the condition to be true (A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*)."

**B. 2:1 "consolation...comfort"**

1. Does Christ console a heavy heart? Does He give peace to the believing soul that is undergoing a trial? Of course, we are not to think that Paul doubted whether there was any consolation in Christ but the form of expression here is one that is designed to urge upon them the duty of seeking the highest possible

**C. 2:1 "comfort"**

1. Strong's #3890 paramuthion; persuasive address, stimulating force, incentive.
2. Used only here in the New Testament.

**D. 2:1 "bowels and mercies" 2:1**

1. If there be any pity or compassion among you as Christians...
2. The bowels were seen to be the seat of human emotions in this day.

**E. Four exhortations in 2:2**

1. Be likeminded, unified in your thinking.
2. Have the same love.
3. Be of one accord.
  - a. Strong's #4861 sumpsuchos; from sun (Strong's #4862) together with, and psuchê (Strong's #5590) soul, life; of one mind, of one accord.
  - b. Used only here in the New Testament.
  - c. Think of a chord on a guitar. All notes that make up that chord must be of the right frequency and the correct harmonics or it sounds bad- discord. When Christians are likewise out of harmony with themselves, the brethren, or God, they "sound bad" are in discord. But when the brethren are dwelling together in unity, it sounds good and harmonious, in harmony, in one accord.
4. Be of one mind.
  - a. "One mind" does not presuppose that every Christian is to think identically. While we must all agree on the fundamentals of the faith, there is room for personal interpretations of certain doctrines and elements of the Bible. Not everyone in my church agrees with me on every single point (and I have had

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some of them tell me so!) but we are of one mind of the fundamentals of the faith. We agree on enough things to be able to fellowship.

5. These exhortations to unity and humility appears several times in Philippians:1:27; 2:2, 5-8; 3:4-8; 4:2. This shows that the Philippian church was having a problem with some disunity among its members, and nearly any church would have.

### **F. 2:2 “Fulfill ye my joy...”**

1. Even in prison, Paul still had the joy. Circumstances may affect happiness, but they do not affect joy.

### **G. 2:2 “likeminded”**

1. An exhortation to unity, that everyone would be “on the same page” and striving toward one spiritual goal.

### **H. 2:3 “strife”**

1. Strong’s #2052 eritheia; electioneering or intriguing for office, a courting distinction, a desire to put one’s self forward, a partisan and fractious spirit which does not disdain low arts.

2. Don’t let your motivation for anything you do be the same as a politician at election time!

### **I. 2:3 “vainglory”**

1. Strong’s #2754 kenodoxia; vain glory, groundless, self-esteem, empty pride, a vain opinion, error.

2. Used only here in the New Testament.

3. Do not let self or the flesh be your motivation.

4. “And yet how often is this rule violated! How often do Christian denominations attempt to outstrip each other, and to see which shall be the greatest! How often do ministers preach with no better aim! How often do we attempt to outdo others in dress, and in the splendor of furniture and equipment! How often, even in plans of benevolence, and in the cause of virtue and religion, is the secret aim to outdo others. This is all wrong.

There is no holiness in such efforts. Never once did the Redeemer act from such a motive, and never once should this motive be allowed to influence us (Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament*).”

### **J. 2:3 “lowliness of mind”**

1. Strong’s #5012 tapeinophrosunê; from a compound of tapeinos (Strong’s #5011) of low degree, and phren (Strong’s #5424) understanding; the having a humble opinion of one’s self, a deep sense of one’s (moral) littleness, modesty, humility, lowliness of mind.

2. The pagan writers considered this a bad word, as in “abject groveling”. It also has the idea of a river where the tide runs low.

3. Humility is always promoted in Scripture.

### **K. 2:3 “esteem”**

1. Strong’s #2233 hegeomai; to lead, to go before, to be a leader, to rule, command, to have authority over, a prince, of regal power, governor, viceroy, chief, leading as respects influence, controlling in counsel, overseers or leaders of the churches.

2. This is from a word referring to a belief that rests, not on one’s inner feelings or sentiment, but on the due consideration of external grounds, on weighing and comparing of facts.

### **L. 2:3 “better than ourselves”**

1. True godly humility always puts others before self. How this rankles the flesh! We are to think more highly of our brother than ourselves. We are to put ourselves last. We are to consider the needs and opinions of our brother to be more important than ours. In other words, we are not to blow our own horn, promote ourselves or esteem ourselves.



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This is difficult because in our old flesh, we love ourselves and are selfish. We want our way and we want all the glory. But the new man and the infilling of the Spirit through the love of God ought to be the cure for such pride and ego. This is the greatest “cure-all” for any church problem- a good dose of humility.

2. An example of this would be how Abram treated Lot in Genesis 13:5-11.

### **M. 2:4 “Look not every man on his own things...”**

1. This is very similar to 4:3. Don’t be self-centered but get your eyes off yourself and onto others! Our neighbor is more important than we are and what we want and need is secondary to that of our neighbor. Thinking about the things of God are the most important of all.

### **N. 2:4 “things of others”**

1. No one is at liberty to live for himself or to disregard the wants of others. The object of this rule is to break up the spirit of selfishness, and to produce a benevolent regard for the happiness of others, especially the brethren.

**2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus**

**2:6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:**

**2:7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:**

**2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the<sup>e</sup> cross.**

## **IX. The Kenosis, or the Self-Humiliation of Christ 2:5-8**

### **A. 2:5 Christ as:**

1. Sovereign 2:5
2. Son 2:6
3. Servant 2:7a
4. Savior 2:7b (John Phillips, *Exploring Ephesians and Philippians*, pages 80-88).

B. Liberals will interpret this passage as poetry, much as they do the book of Job, Exodus 15, Judges 5, Deuteronomy 32, many Psalms, and so on. This gives them an excuse not to interpret the passage literally, as if God could put truth and revelation into poetry. What translations do thus? The New International Version, the Roman Catholic New American Bible, Good News For Modern Man (Today's English Version) and the Roman Catholic Jerusalem Bible are guilty of trying to undermine the literal interpretation of this precious and important passage.

### **C. 2:5 “let this mind be in you”**

1. What a pleasure and privilege it is to “think the thoughts of God after Him”, something that cannot be done if you don’t have the (same) mind as Christ. The same attitude as Christ had. The mind of Christ, as seen in 2:1-4. It is an attitude of humility in service and putting others first. Christ did this in His incarnation. He did it for us. He suffered and died on our behalf. Christ did not need to die for us to save Himself or to glorify Himself for He had all that before His incarnation. The salvation He provided for us was all done so that sinners might be saved. He thought of us and what we needed!

a. This is also where every thought is brought into captivity to Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5).

b. Proud, arrogant, haughty preachers obviously do not have the mind of Christ. How many Fundamentalist preachers are guilty of such a sin! They think the world revolves around them because they have the largest Sunday School in the state, or that if you attack them then you are out to destroy Fundamentalism, or

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you do not have a "burden for the lost." Such attitudes sicken God and irritate man. Even sinners can't stand this brand of "preacher".

2. Were the Philippians suffering from an unhealthy dose of ego and pride? Is this what occasioned Paul's exhortation for the Philippians to consider the humility of Christ?

**D.** We see a four-fold picture of Christ in 2:6-8:

1. Christ as God- 2:6
2. Christ as man- 2:7
3. Christ as a servant- 2:8a
4. Christ as a criminal- 2:8b

**E.** 2:5 Paul uses the phrase "Christ Jesus" to put the emphasis on the deity of Christ and His divine works. "Jesus Christ" puts the emphasis on His humanity.

**F.** 2:6 This is because Jesus was/is God from all eternity. Christ was God before His incarnation, as well as afterwards and even to this hour and forever beyond. Christ continually claimed to be God.

1. Christ had the same title as God (Isaiah 9:6).
2. Christ had the same power as God (Matthew 26:64).
3. Christ had the same attributes as God (John 3:13).
4. Christ had the same authority as God (Matthew 25:31,32).
5. Christ had the same nature as God (Colossians 1:3-10 and John 1:1-4).
6. Christ is also the image of God in Hebrews 1:1-3, 2 Corinthians 4:4 and Colossians 1:3-15.

a. This is a clear declaration of the deity of Christ.

**G. 2:6 "robbery"**

1. Strong's #725 harpagmos; the act of seizing, robbery, a thing seized or to be seized, booty to deem anything a prize, a thing to be seized upon or to be held fast, retained.
2. Used only here in the New Testament.
3. Since Christ was fully God, He did not think it a scandal or issue to consider Himself to be equal with the Father or to allow men to think so of Him and to be so worshipped. When we say that Jesus is God and that He is equal to the Father, there is no error in that. It is the truth. Christ is not embarrassed or ashamed by it and the Father certainly does not disapprove of such thought. The only ones who do think it to be robbery are assorted heretics like Jehovah Witnesses, Unitarians and other assorted cultists. But if it doesn't bother Christ or the Father, why should it bother us, or anyone else?
4. Christ didn't have to earn His deity by the incarnation- He already had it. And He did not have to die on the cross to keep it, it was His regardless. But while on earth, Christ temporarily waived any and all rights and privileges of His deity. This is illustrated by Christ washing feet in John 13:1-17.
5. "**Robbery**"? Christ clearly claimed to be God while on earth and He claimed to be equal with the Father. The Jews accused Jesus of stealing the glory of the Father by such declarations (being a "God-robber"), so Christ was crucified between two robbers!
6. Christ was God before His incarnation from eternity past, while on earth and after His resurrection, so there was no problem for Christ to claim to be God or to be equal with God, or for us to consider Him to be God.

**H. 2:7 "no reputation"**

1. This refers to His incarnation. Christ was not born into a royal family on earth with pomp and glory and money. Rather, He selected a poor teenage Jewish virgin married to an obscure carpenter, who lived in the middle of nowhere. Christ could have been born in a palace instead of in a barn, but He selected obscurity and poverty. He emptied Himself of all the prerogatives and honors of deity that were rightly His. He temporarily

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laid them aside at His incarnation, did without them during His earthly life and took them up again after His resurrection and ascension.

2. Jesus was the only man in history to choose the time of His birth, His parents, the place and the circumstances of His birth! And when He did, He selected obscurity, humility and poverty.

### **I. Christ had no pride of:**

#### 1. Birth

a. Mark 6:3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

#### 2. Upbringing

a. John 1:46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?

#### 3. Scholarship

a. John 7:15 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

#### 4. Ability

a. John 5:19 The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

#### 5. Success

a. John 7:5 For neither did his brethren believe in him.

#### 6. Looks or appearance

a. Isaiah 53:2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

#### 7. Standing.

a. See Him washing feet in John 13:1-17, which was the work of a slave.

8. Christ's only reputation in the eyes of the world was a poor one. The Jews thought Him to be a blasphemer, His family thought Him to be nuts and the Romans considered Him a thief. Even today, "Christians" sour the reputation of Christ by reducing Him from God to a "religious teacher" or a "social revolutionary".

### **J. 2:7 "form of a servant"**

1. Christ was born a man but even then, the lowest class of man- a servant. He was not born a king or a teacher or a soldier or a philosopher on earth where the possibility existed for some sort of human glory to be obtained, but rather the station which has absolutely no glory attached to it whatsoever- that of a lowly servant. Christ took the lowest title on Himself that existed- Son of Man. It is humbling enough to be a man but to be the Son of Man meant you were inferior even to man! The lowest form of man there was!

2. The ESV has "was born" but the Authorized Version has "was made". This is an important distinction because there is nothing special in the fact that Christ "was born" for we all were "born". But the Authorized Version's use of "was made" takes us back to the Virgin Birth, as in John 1:14; Romans 1:3, here and in Hebrews 2:9. These verses hint at the very unusual circumstances of Christ's birth.

3. Jesus Christ was born a man. He was fully human as though He had never been God. He had human weaknesses and limitations. The only thing He did not have was a fallen human nature. Christ escaped inheriting that by bypassing a human father. If Christ would have had a human father (like Joseph), He would have inherited that Adamic nature that all of us are saddled with. But this is why the virgin birth is so important

because it enabled Christ to escape the fallen human nature. He had a perfect, unfallen human nature as well as that divine nature He already possessed as God.

**K. 2:8 “being found in fashion as a man”**

1. This describes the full humanity of Christ, as Jesus, in the form of God, was also in fashion as a man at the same time. This is the hypostatic union of Christ, where Christ had two natures, human and divine, combined into one unique nature. Christ was not 50% God and 50% man. He was 100% God and 100% man, existing in a unique nature no one else ever has had or will have. Yet for the fact that He was God, He appeared as a normal man. There was nothing to physically indicate that there was anything special about Jesus. He appeared as a normal man- no halos or circles of light around His head or anything like that.

2. The ESV’s “being found in human form” is very clunky, awkward and simply not a necessary change.

**L. 2:8 “humbled”**

1. Strong’s #5013 tapeinoô; to make low, bring low, to level, reduce to a plain, to bring into a humble condition, reduce to meaner circumstances, to abase, to humble

2. This phrase is impossible to understand or comprehend. Here is God Almighty, Who created the universe. He desired to purchase the redemption of man that He created so He became one of them by the incarnation. As a man, He humbled Himself. God humbling Himself as a man! Whoever heard of such a thing? Not Mohammad or the Buddha or Zoroaster or any other religious teacher or system for they have so such concept. This is why Christianity is the truth and why it is so far superior than any religious system that man can hatch up because man could certainly not conceive of anything like this!

3. In theological circles, this self-humbling of Christ from deity to humanity is called the "kenosis", from the Greek "kenoô".

4. "The apostle knew that, to create concord, you need first to beget lowliness of mind. Men do not quarrel when their ambitions have come to an end. When each one is willing to be least...there is an end to party spirit." (Charles Spurgeon, "Our Lord In The Valley of Humiliation" in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, 38:529, sermon 2281)

5. How did Christ humble Himself?

a. In emptying himself of His divine glory.

b. In being incarnate - taking upon him the human form.

c. In becoming a servant.

d. In condescending to die, which is the common fate of sinners.

e. In condescending, not only to death, but to the lowest and most ignominious kind of death, the death of the cross; the punishment of the meanest of slaves and worst of felons.

**M. 2:8 “became obedient”**

1. Who, or what, did Christ have to obey? If man was to be redeemed from the dominion of Satan, the Father decreed that Christ would have to be the substitute for man. Christ had to obey that. And the way that man would be redeemed was for Christ to die the most shameful, humiliating and painful death that a man could die on the cross. He had to obey that to. If Christ had disobeyed in this point, we would still be in our sins. As God, death had no power or authority over Christ. To die as a man, Christ had to put Himself under the authority of death and had to obey the principle “It is appointed unto man once to die...” But not any death! He became obedient to the most humiliating death that any man could die. To die of a heart attack or by a mugging is one thing, but

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to die such a shameful death as crucifixion is something else. For a criminal to die such a death is accepted, but for a holy, harmless and sinless God to die such a death?

2. The ESV has “death of a cross” where all the other translations use “death of the cross”. Paul has a specific historical incident in mind, the crucifixion of Christ, not just any old crucifixion.

### **N. 2:8 “cross”**

1. Strong’s #4716 *stauros*; a cross, an instrument of most cruel and ignominious punishment, borrowed by the Greeks and Romans from the Phoenicians; to it were affixed among the Romans, down to the time of Constantine the Great, the guiltiest criminals, particularly the basest slaves, robbers, the authors and abettors of insurrections, and occasionally in the provinces, at the arbitrary pleasure of the governors, upright and peaceable men also, and even Roman citizens themselves.

2. Christ humbly obeyed the Father’s will concerning such a death.

3. It was the worst possible death a man could die, yet Christ submitted to it humbly and obediently- for His enemies (Romans 5:10)!

4. “The Phoenicians and Persians practiced crucifixion before the Greeks and Romans adopted it. It was a form of execution from which Roman citizens were exempt. Only the worst criminals among the slaves and foreigners underwent crucifixion.<sup>74</sup> Hanging on a tree was a sign to the Jews that the person so disgraced was under the curse of God (Deuteronomy 21:23; cf. Galatians 3:13) (Thomas Constable, *Expository Notes on the Bible*).”

O. In summation, we see then the Seven Steps of the Humiliation of Christ from heaven to earth:

1. He made Himself of no reputation.
  - a. He was given no human glory and no advantages of birth or standing.
2. He took on the form of a servant.
  - a. Luke 22:7 “I am among you as one that serveth”.
3. He took on the likeness of man
  - a. He looked like a man as He was made a man.
4. He was found in fashion as a man.
  - a. If Christ would redeem man, He must become man, live as a man and die as a man. Only a perfect Man can redeem fallen man.
  - b. His manhood was nothing special save for the absence of sin. He was born a baby, grew through childhood and the teenage years, then developed into a man.
  - c. "He grew up, and the time of His appearing unto men arrived; but I cannot pass over the 30 years of His silence without feeling that here was a marvelous instance of how He humbled Himself. I know young men who think that two or three years' education is too long for them. They want to be preaching at once...They want to go forth to fight before they have buckled on their armor. But it was not so with Christ; 30 long years passed over His head, and still there was no Sermon on the Mount." (Spurgeon, "Our Lord In The Valley of Humiliation" in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, 38:532, sermon 2281)
5. He humbled Himself
  - a. We all have been humbled against our will but Christ humbled Himself as it was the Father’s will.
6. He became obedient.
  - a. Hebrews 5:8, He learned obedience by the things He suffered.
7. He became obedient, even to the death of the cross
  - a. He not only descended to death, but to the lowest death possible. Then after

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that, He further descended as He went to the lowest parts of the earth.

b. Who else qualifies? Did Buddha, or Mohammad, or Joseph Smith or Mary Baker Eddy or any pope do this? Would they if they could have? These and others like them are but false messiahs, destined for the lake of fire. And how can we hope to measure the depth of this descent Christ made?

3. He was obedient unto death but not obedient to death, which is shown by His resurrection and defeat of death.

8. But after the humiliation, God then exalted Christ (looking ahead to 2:9) in 7 steps:

- a. He was highly exalted
- b. He was given a name above every name
- c. He was given universal dominion
- d. He was given dominion over things in heaven
- e. He was given dominion over things on earth
- f. He was given dominion over things under the earth
- g. He was given absolute Lordship

9. No exaltation without the humiliation! This proves the deity of Jesus Christ in His doing this. Could you imagine any man lowering himself so drastically and humbling himself so radically to die for a race of ungrateful rebels?

**2:9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name**

**2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;**

**2:11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

### **X. The Exaltation of Christ 2:9-11**

#### **A. 2:9 "highly exalted"**

1. Not just exalted, but highly exalted.
2. Christ humbled Himself when He became a man and thus the Father has exalted Him and has given Christ a name that is above every name. This is the path to true greatness in the eyes of God. Humble yourself and strip yourself of all pride and pretense and God will exalt you.
3. This is the way it always works. Christ is absolutely humbled (all the way to the cross and Hades) and the Father exalts Him back to the third heaven.
4. There are many examples in Scripture of God exalting men after bringing them low:
  - a. Joseph (in jail)
  - b. Job (on the ash heap)
  - c. Moses (on the run as a murderer and on a 40-year exile)
  - d. David (a shepherd)
  - e. Peter (a fisherman)
  - f. Paul (stuck blind)
5. It's like this in life as well. You never start at the top. You start at the bottom, mopping floors and running errands. Baseball and hockey players start their career in the minor leagues and work their way up to the big leagues. Prove yourself faithful in little things and you will be exalted to greater ones.

#### **B. This exaltation of Christ by the Father involves several things:**

1. He has been given a name that is above every name (2:9)

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a. No human name is worthy to be compared to Christ. Those whom the world lauds, such as politicians, sports stars, movie stars or such like, are all inferior to the name of Christ. There is no man worthy to be mentioned in the same breath as Christ. This is a title of honor, victory and exaltation that Christ earned due to His successful work on the cross that is reserved for Him alone. No one else has ever been given such a name and no one else ever will for no one else can do what Christ did for us in purchasing our redemption and making our salvation possible.

### 2. Every knee should bow (2:10)

a. This includes everything and everyone- those in heaven (angelic beings), those in earth (men) and those under the earth (the unrighteous dead, Satan and his angels).

b. Oh yes, that day is coming! There will be that day of the Great White Throne Judgment where every Pharaoh, Nimrod, Korah, Cain, Ham, Canaan, Esau, the inhabitants of Sodom, the Amalakites, the Canaanite tribes, the kings of Assyria and Babylon, Haman, those wicked kings of Israel and Judah, Jezebel, every Roman emperor, Alexander the Coppersmith, Nero, the Herods, every pope, Hitler, Stalin, Lenin, Marx and Engels, Westcott and Hort, Napoleon, Idi Amin, Pol Pot, Constantine, Charlemagne, Voltaire, Spinoza, every American president and UN secretary-general, and everyone else who opposed Christ, rejected Christ and hated the Word of God will stand before Christ and proclaim to the top of their lungs "Jesus Christ is Lord! Worthy is the Lamb!" Then they will bow before Christ before they are cast into the Lake of Fire. That day will be the great equalizer. Christ will exact His revenge on all these men for all the evil they have done and all the grief they have caused on that day!

c. Every man will bow the knee. This is an appointment none can escape. The point is when and how you bow it. You can bow it in this life voluntarily and be saved. Or you can refuse to do it in this life and be forced to do it when you stand at the Great White Throne. Do it in this life and be saved, or don't do it and be damned.

d. It seems silly in the light of the humility of 2:5-8 that anyone should bow their knee and confess the Lordship of such a low and humble Christ. This is the stumbling-block that everyone must overcome- humble yourself to one who humbled Himself for you on the cross who was afterwards highly exalted by the Father.

### 3. Every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father (2:11)

1. Those who utterly refused to confess Christ in this life will be forced to do so in the next.

2. Bow the knee in this life voluntarily and be saved or refuse, have it dragged out of you at the Judgment, and be damned. Your choice.

#### **C. 2:10 "every knee should bow"**

1. Worship and confession. Every tongue confesses (the vocal act of worship) and every knee bows (the physical act of worship).

2. Heavenly beings and saints in heaven certainly have no trouble in doing this!

3. Living men on the earth will also confess if they are alive at the second coming. Many living now (or at any time during human history) have done this willingly.

4. Those in hell, as well as the fallen angels will also do this, quite against their will.

#### **D. 2:11 "Jesus Christ in Lord"**

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1. Not just a “good teacher” or the “Great Physician” or the “Man From Galilee” but God Almighty Himself, come in the flesh. The full deity of Christ will be confessed.

**E. 2:11 “To the glory of God the Father”**

1. Man shall not be glorified in this, only Christ.

**2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.**

**2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.**

**2:14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:**

**2:15 That ye may be blameless and harmless the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;**

**2:16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.**

**XI. Work Out Your Own Salvation 2:12-16**

**A. 2:12 “obeyed”**

1. To obey someone in authority when he is present among you is one thing, but it is quite something else to obey that same person when he is not present and is not able to “check up” on you!

**B. 2:12 “work out your own salvation”**

1. Not work for your salvation or work to keep your salvation but work it out. God implanted that salvation into your heart at salvation but now it is up to you to do something with it. God worked it in, you work it out and manifest it, build up it and do something with it.

2. This is the process of gradual practical sanctification which every Christian must undertake in his life if he is to grow, bear fruit and develop a Christ-honoring testimony. But many Christians never work out that which God has worked in. They keep their light under the bushel and never manifest Christ-likeness in their lives. These are the "Secret Service Christians"- no one knows they are saved and no one would ever accuse them of being a Christian!

3. You must work out your own salvation. You cannot work out someone else's salvation nor can anyone else work out yours. Salvation is an individual thing and we all will answer for what we did with our salvation, not with what someone else did with their salvation.

**C. 2:12 Why with "fear and trembling?"**

1. Because we realize that we will have to stand before the bema judgment of Christ after the rapture to give account of those things done in the body and out of the body. Our stewardship will be examined, and it will not be a light thing. There will be rebuke, tears, loss and disappointment at the bema. Oh, to receive a frown from Christ! That is something that ought to whip the Christian into service, growth and action! We fear suffering loss at the bema by not working out our salvation. We do not fear hell, but we do fear Christ's disapproval on our lives. No one likes to be judged or evaluated in this life, but even then, you are only standing before man. Yet even that can make us very nervous. How much more when we stand before God Almighty?

2. This is something that always concerned Paul, whether he would be approved or rejected at the judgment. He relates this in 1 Corinthians 9:27 where he expressed his constant fear that he might be considered a castaway, someone whose works and ministry would be “unapproved” by God. If Paul had to worry about this, how much more



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do we? And there is “fear and trembling” involved with that. To a Christian, a disappointed God would be harder to face than an angry one.

3. Colossians 1:28 also speaks to this. Who is Paul warning? Christians! What is he warning them of? Losing their salvation? No, as we believe the Bible clearly teaches the security of the believer. He is warning the Colossian church of what he mentions in 1 Corinthians 9:27- not faring well at the bema seat. This is something preachers need to be continually warning their hearers about.

4. We could go to the parable of the pounds in Luke 19:12-26. The Master gave his ten servants ten pounds each (19:13) then told them to occupy until he returned. One servant gained ten more pounds, the other five additional pounds and we assume the other nine servants all also gained additional pounds by their selling and trading. All these servants were commended when their Master returned and reckoned their accounts. They gave their Master more than they gave them. Any increase was commended. But one servant was lazy and fearful and hid the pound he received. He was condemned (19:22-26). He ended up with nothing, no reward at all.

a. Many Christians will find themselves in the same situation as this third servant at the judgment, with no rewards and a condemnation from the Lord. As a Christian, you have no more and no less of the Gospel than anyone else. You have been given the same salvation that was given to Moody, Spurgeon, Patten, etc. Now what you do with it is a different story, and that is what this parable is all about.

5. Work out your own salvation and solve its problems as a schoolboy would work out a math problem.

6. “Fear” is inward, “trembling” is outward.

### **D. 2:12 “trembling”**

1. Strong’s #5156 tromos; a trembling or quaking with fear, used to describe the anxiety of one who distrusts his ability completely to meet all requirements, but religiously does his utmost to fulfill his duty

### **E. 2:13 “His good pleasure”**

1. God works in us according to His good pleasure in His sovereignty, but we also are responsible. God saves us but we must repent. God sanctifies us but we must grow. We again notice this balance between divine sovereignty and human responsibility not only for salvation but also for sanctification. God will not do that which He desires to do in your life if you are too lazy or carnal to work out your own salvation.

2. The first part of our salvation consists of a work for us, the second, of a work in us. The work for us is perfect as nothing can be added to it. The second part is the operation of the Holy Spirit. The tree must work itself out of the seed shell if it is to grow into a mighty tree. It is a battle and is not easy. So it also it with the Christian.

### **F. 2:14 “murmurings”**

1. Strong’s #1112 goggusmos; a murmur, murmuring, a secret displeasure not openly avowed.

2. If anyone would have had a reason to murmur against the will of God, it would have been Christ, for having to die for a race on sinful, rebellious, ungrateful sinners. He was lied about, mistreated, murdered, having to live in a very mean a common existence for his 33 years on earth, enduring the whispers that He was illegitimate, with 12 disciples who couldn’t really “fill the bill”, with one of them a thief who betrayed Him for a pocket full of silver coins. Yet never a murmur passed over His lips or arose in His heart.

Others in Scripture have murmured, such as Jeremiah or even Paul in his frustrations,

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but overall, they were also obedient to the will of God for their lives. Happy is that man who can submit to God's will without complaining and murmuring.

### **G. 2:14 “disputings”**

1. Strong's #1261 dialogismos; the thinking of a man deliberating with himself, a thought, inward reasoning, questioning about what is true, hesitation, doubting
2. “Murmuring” is quarrelling with God. “Disputings” is quarrelling with man.

H. If we obey the commands in 2:14, we will be blameless and harmless as well as sons of God.

1. We are also to accept all things from the hand of Christ for our lives without murmurings or disputings.
2. These events and circumstances He allows into our lives are to aid us in working out our salvation. All of this works toward our sanctification and makes us better Christians. This is certainly not easy and is not possible without the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit in the life of every Christian, for it is the nature of fallen man to complain about anything and everything.

### **I. 2:15 “blameless”**

1. Strong's #273 amemptos; from a (Strong's #1), a negative particle; and memphomai (Strong's #3201) to blame; blameless, deserving no censure, free from fault or defect.
2. We can't live sinless in this life, but we can live blameless.

### **J. 2:15 “harmless”**

1. Strong's #185 akeraios; from a (Strong's #1), a negative particle; and kerannumi (Strong's #2767) to mix, mingle; unmixed, pure as in wines or metals, of the mind, without a mixture of evil, free from guile, innocent, simple
2. The translations render this phrase in various ways:
  - a. Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles- faultless and pure
  - b. Geneva and Bishops Bibles- blameless and pure
  - c. ESV- blameless and innocent

### **K. 2:15 “without rebuke”**

1. Strong's #298 amometos; from a (Strong's #1), a negative particle; and mômaoma (Strong's #3469) to blame; that cannot be censured, blameless.

### **L. 2:15 “crooked”**

1. Strong's #4646 skolios; crooked, curved, perverse, wicked, unfair, surly, forward

### **M. 2:15 “perverse”**

1. Strong's #1294 diastrephô; from dia (Strong's #1223) by, through; and strephô (Strong's #4762) to turn; to distort, turn aside, to oppose, plot against the saving purposes and plans of God, to turn aside from the right path, to pervert, corrupt, Showing a deliberate and obstinate desire to behave in a way that is unreasonable or unacceptable, often, contrary to the accepted or expected standard or practice, distorted from that which is right.

### **N. 2:15 “nation”**

1. Has there ever been any nation in human history that was not crooked and perverse?

### **O. 2:15 “world”**

1. Strong's #2889 kosmos; an apt and harmonious arrangement or constitution, order, government, ornament, decoration, adornment, i.e. the arrangement of the stars, 'the heavenly hosts', as the ornament of the heavens, the world, the universe, the whole circle of earthly goods, endowments riches, advantages, pleasures, etc, which although hollow and frail and fleeting, stir desire, seduce from God and are obstacles to the cause of Christ
2. One desire of Christ regarding our lives is seen in 2:15- that we might shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation. We are to let our lights so shine before

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men by our testimonies and walk, both of which ought to be evident and obvious. Our lives and love toward Christ should serve as a constant rebuke to a sin-darkened world. We can preach without saying a word if we live right.

### **P. 2:16 “holding forth”**

1. Strong’s #1907 epechô; from epi (Strong’s #1909) on, in; and echô (Strong’s #2192) to have, hold; to have or hold upon, apply, to observe, attend to. In classical Greek, *to hold out, present*, as to offer wine to a guest or the breast to an infant.

a. The epi- prefix works to intensify the word.

2. We offer, not compel, and we realize that the offer may be refused. This is the ministry of Christian, to get the Word of God out into the highways and the hedges, for no one can be saved apart from the Word of God. It must be taken out of the churches and taken into the marketplace of life and be made known for it to have the effect of lives that it can have.

3. This is the responsibility of every Christian, to keep the Bible in the public view at all times, especially in dealing with sinners. Put it on display and let the Bible speak for itself! Get it out of the church-house and get it out into the marketplace and give it as much exposure as you can.

4. Why this wording? To show that the Bible is not a dead book, not just another “religious book” or a piece of “great historical literature”. The Bible is the only Book that is actually alive and that can impart spiritual and eternal life to the reader who believes its message. It is literally a Word that gives life!

5. “An allusion, some think, to those towers which were built at the entrance of harbors, on which fires were kept during the night to direct ships into the port. Genuine Christians, by their holy lives and conversation, are the means of directing others, not only how to escape those dangers to which they are exposed on the tempestuous ocean of human life, but also of leading them into the haven of eternal safety and rest (Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*).”

6. “That is, you are under obligation to hold forth the word of life. It is a duty incumbent on you as Christians to do it. The “word of life” means the gospel, called the “word of life” because it is the message that promises life; or perhaps this is a Hebraism, denoting the living, or life-giving word. The gospel stands thus in contrast with all human systems of religion - for they have no efficacy to save - and to the law which “killeth”. The duty here enjoined is that of making the gospel known to others, and of thus keeping up the knowledge of it in the world. This duty rests on Christians, and they cannot escape from the obligation. They are bound to do this, not only because God commands it, but:

a. Because they are called into the church that they may be witnesses for God, Isaiah 43:10.

b. Because they are kept on the earth for that purpose. If it were not for some such design, they would be removed to heaven at once on their conversion.

c. Because there are no others to do it. The frivolous ones will not warn the fools, nor will the proud warn the proud, nor the scoffer the scoffer. The thoughtless and the vain will not go and tell others that there is a God and a Savior; nor will the wicked warn the wicked, and tell them that they are in the way to hell. There are none who will do this but Christians; and, if they neglect it, sinners will go unwarned and unalarmed down to death. This duty rests on every Christian.

“The exhortation here is not made to the pastor, or to any officer of the church particularly; but to the mass of communicants. They are to shine as lights in the world; they are to hold forth the word of life. There is not one member of a church who is so

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obscure as to be exempt from the obligation; and there is not one who may not do something in this work. If we are asked how this may be done, we may reply:

d. They are to do it by example. Everyone is to hold forth the living word in that way.

e. By efforts to send the gospel to those who have it not. There is almost no one who cannot contribute something, though it may be but two mites, to accomplish this.

f. By conversation. There is no Christian who has not some influence over the minds and hearts of others; and he is bound to use that influence in holding forth the word of life.

g. By defending the divine origin of religion when attacked.

h. By rebuking sin, and thus testifying to the value of holiness. The defense of the truth, under God, and the diffusion of a knowledge of the way of salvation, rests on those who are Christians.

“Paganism never originates a system which it would not be an advantage to the world to have destroyed as soon as it is conceived. Philosophy has never yet told of a way by which a sinner may be saved. The world at large devises no plan for the salvation of the soul. The most crude, ill-digested, and perverse systems of belief conceivable, prevail in the community called “the world.” Every form of opinion has an advocate there; every monstrous vagary that the human mind ever conceived, finds friends and defenders there. The human mind has of itself no elastic energy to bring it from the ways of sin; it has no recuperative power to lead it back to God. The world at large is dependent on the church for any just views of God, and of the way of salvation; and every Christian is to do his part in making that salvation known (Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament*).”

### **Q. 2:16 “word of life”**

1. The “word of life” is the Bible, and nothing else.

2. Human books are all dead books as none of them can impart spiritual life.

### **R. 2:16 “day of Christ”**

1. The “Day of Christ” is different than the “Day of the Lord”. The Day of Christ is the Bema Judgment of Christians which occurs after the rapture while the Day of the Lord is the reference to the Battle of Armageddon. The two are not to be confused. The Bema judgment is where the Christian is judged for faithfulness and stewardship and where eternal rewards are determined- or withheld.

2. We note with some irritation the note in the Scofield Reference Bible. It makes a severe error in correcting the Authorized Version on page 1271 by asserting that “the day of Christ” in 2 Thessalonians 2:2 is a mistranslation. Shame on Scofield for swallowing the Alexandrian mentality of assuming you are intelligent enough or spiritual enough to be correcting the Bible! The true and accurate Textus Receptus Greek reads “hEmera tou Christou”, the day of the Christ. No mistranslation! But the corrupt and apostate United Bible Society text (26th edition) and the 23rd edition of *Novum Testamentum Graece* both read “hEmera tou kuriou”, which is where Scofield picked up his error. This error comes from confusing the Day of the Lord with the Day of Christ, thinking they are the same event, which they are not. This error also comes from automatically assuming that critical Greek scholarship is correct without “searching them out”. Even the ESV gets it right here.

### **S. 2:16 “run”**

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1. Strong's #5143 *trechô*; to run, word occurs in Greek writings denoting to incur extreme peril, which it requires the exertion of all one's effort to overcome, labor to the point of exhaustion.

### **T. 2:16 "labored"**

1. Strong's #2872 *kopiaô*; to grow weary, tired, exhausted (with toil or burdens or grief). to labor with wearisome effort, to toil

**2:17 Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with<sup>t</sup> you all.**

**2:18 For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.**

## **XII. Paul's Willingness to Be Sacrificed for the Philippians 2:17,18**

### **A. 2:17 "Offered"**

1. Strong's #4689 *spendô*; to pour out as a drink offering, make a libation, used of one whose blood is poured out in a violent death for the cause of God.

2. Paul expresses his willingness to be sacrificed (be poured out as a drink offering) in martyrdom (or some other form of violent death) if that be the will of God and if it would be a benefit to the Philippians. Paul was willing to serve and minister to them by the ultimate means- death. Sometimes a death can result in greater good than a life. The death of every martyr was an immense benefit for the overall spiritual well-being of the Church.

### **B. 2:17 "service"**

1. Strong's #3009 *leitourgia*; a public office which a citizen undertakes to administer at his own expense, a service or ministry of the priests relative to the prayers and sacrifices offered to God, a gift or benefaction for the relief of the needy.

**2:19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.**

**2:20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.**

**2:21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.**

**2:22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.**

**2:23 Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me.**

**2:24 But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly.**

## **XIII. Commendation of Timothy 2:19-24**

### **A. 2:19 "send Timothy shortly unto you"**

1. Paul hoped to be able to send his right-hand man, Timothy, to the Philippians since Paul was unable to make the trip. Paul would send him to learn of the state of the Philippians and to discern their spiritual condition. Paul did hope to eventually revisit the Philippians (2:24).

### **B. 2:19 "good comfort"**

1. Strong's #2174 *eupsucheô*; from *eu* (Strong's #2095) well, good; and *psuchê* (Strong's #5590) soul, life; to be of good courage, to be of a cheerful spirit.

2. Used only here in the New Testament, a very rare verb.

### **C. 2:19 "your state"**

1. Paul just had to know! No guessing, hoping or "second-hand information". Paul wanted to send Timothy that he could give Paul that "first hand" report on the state of this church.

**D. 2:20 “likeminded”**

1. Strong’s #2473 isopsuchos; from psisos (Strong’s #2470) equal, agree together; and psuchê (Strong’s #5590) soul, life; equal in soul.
2. Used only here in the New Testament.
3. No one else (after Paul) had the care and concern for the Philippian church that Timothy had, so he was the best man for this job.

E. Is there a hint of some disappointment by Paul in verse 21? Paul was going to send Timothy because he had no other man who cared for the Philippians as did Timothy. Timothy loved this church as much as Paul did. While some men, including preachers, tended to seek their own welfare and to minister to themselves rather than to others, Timothy was a different breed. He was the sort of preacher who put the welfare of those he ministered to before his own needs and wants.

**F. 2:22 “proof”**

1. Some in Philippi seemed to doubt Timothy’s credentials or spirituality in his ministry, so Paul vouches for Timothy and gives him the highest endorsement that he could.

**G. 2:22 “son”**

1. Paul refers to Timothy as a son. Paul and Timothy had a father-son type relationship. We never read of Paul having any children, so Timothy was like a son to him. Timothy’s father was an unsaved Greek, so Paul was the father Timothy never had. But there was also the spiritual father-son relationship between these two as Paul had led Timothy to Christ and had groomed him and trained him in the ministry.
2. The Philippians also knew Timothy very well, so they were not strangers to each other. They both had the highest respect and confidence in each other.

**H. 2:23 “I hope to send presently”**

1. This visit was not yet set in stone. Paul knew too well from personal experience that things could go wrong with these plans and unexpected hindrances could occur.

**I. 2:23 “how it will go with me”**

1. Paul was uncertain about his plans of sending Timothy to Philippi as he was still uncertain as to what his fate would be and what the timetable involved in his situation would be. There were still elements of Paul’s situation that God had not revealed to him, so Paul, like anyone else in a similar situation, was still somewhat uncertain as to what the will of God would be for him regarding his imprisonment.

**J. 2:24 “trust”**

1. Perfect tense in the Greek.
2. Although Paul still had some uncertainty regarding his situation, he had a complete confidence that the Lord would allow him to visit Philippi again, sooner or later.

**K. 2:24 “I myself shall come shortly”**

1. When Paul got out of jail and away from Rome, all within the will of the Lord.

**2:25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants.**

**2:26 For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick.**

**2:27 For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.**

**2:28 I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful.**

**2:29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation:**

**2:30 Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.**

**XIV. Commendation of Epaphroditus 2:25-30**

**A. 2:25 “Epaphroditus”**

1. Paul did send Epaphroditus and now thinks it necessary to send Timothy. Maybe Timothy was not available beforehand and Paul sent Epaphroditus instead to get a report on the Philippians.
2. "Epaphroditus" is derived from "Aphrodite", meaning "charming." (M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies in Greek New Testament* 3:441). All we know of him is from this passage as he is mentioned nowhere else in the New Testament.
3. Four things Epaphroditus was:
  - a. A brother (a spiritual brother, not a physical one)
  - b. A companion in labor
  - c. A fellowsoldier. Notice Paul's military language. Epaphroditus, as a fellow-soldier, will not break rank, steal your canteen or rations, hold back while you are advancing, fail to cover your flank, betray you to the enemy, refuse to share his rations, go to sleep on watch or run from the front line and force you to do all the fighting.
  - d. Your messenger
    - i. Strong's #652 *apostolos*; a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders. Literally, "your apostle", showing that the word and the related office was one of service and ministry more than ruling.
4. Paul obviously felt he was a valuable companion and recommended him as such.

**B. 2:26 “heaviness”**

1. Strong's #85 *adêmoneô*; to be troubled, great distress or anguish, depressed. A very strong Greek word for depression. It is used to describe the Lord's agony during His passion (Matthew 26:37; Mark 14:33).
2. It bothered Epaphroditus more to know that the Philippians were concerned about him during his illness than for him to be sick himself. This is why he was "full of heaviness".

**C. 2:26,27 “sick”**

1. A problem arose those in that Epaphroditus overworked himself, nearly to the point of death. Have you ever heard some men say, "I'd rather burn out than rust out?" It is wrong to rust out through inactivity but it is just as wrong to overwork yourself into an early grave. The Christian life and ministry is a marathon, not a sprint. Overwork to the point of death shows no respect for your body. Dead preachers do not accomplish much. It is no sin to moderate your pace to keep your health up and to take the occasional vacation and day off. "Do thyself no harm" is still sound apostolic advice.
2. Why didn't Paul simply heal Epaphroditus? It is plain and obvious that it is not always God's will to heal sickness. God can get glory out of sickness and such periods can actually be good for us. God may have to let us break down for a while to force us to take a rest. It also gives us some time to pray more and to simply relax physically and mentally.
  - a. These Pentecostals who are always harping that it is a sin to be sick ought to consider Epaphroditus' situation. But it is obvious that the gift of physical healing did not always reside with the apostles nor was it universal among them or in the early church (1 Timothy 5:23; 2 Timothy 4:20).
  - b. If Paul could have healed Epaphroditus, he certainly would. After all, Paul thanked God for raising him back up because if he had died, Paul would have

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been heartbroken ("sorrow upon sorrow"). Epaphroditus was healed, but Paul did not do it, the Lord did.

### D. 2:28 **"I sent him more carefully"**

1. After his recovery, Paul sent Epaphroditus again to Philippi all the more carefully, no doubt with strict instructions to take it easier this time and not overwork himself.

### E. 2:29 **"Receive him"**

1. "Respect him and honor him as a worthy brother and servant in the Lord".

G. Verse 30 is not a rebuke of the Philippians for some lack of service that they failed to extend toward Paul, but rather deals with those things Paul needed that the Philippians were unable to provide for Paul. They couldn't do everything for Paul, so Epaphroditus had to pick up the slack and add these ministries to his own. Paul had nothing but praise for the liberality and generosity that the Phillipian congregation had extended to him.



**Philippians Chapter 3**

**3:1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.**

**3:2<sup>a</sup> Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.**

**3:3<sup>a</sup> For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.**

**XV. Beware of the Flesh 3:1-3**

**A. 3:1 “rejoice”**

1. The English definition has the “re-“ prefix in front of the “joy” stem, meaning to be happy again and again and again, in a continual sense.

2. Paul’s continual theme of the book- rejoice regardless of the circumstances.

Remember, Paul wrote this in jail, his only crime was preaching an unpopular gospel. Yet while sitting in a Roman jail cell, Paul could soar above his circumstances and still find causes to rejoice while everyone else would be moaning about their situation. This is what the gospel does, it lifts people from their worldly trials and tribulations and transports them to glory. Joseph was like this while he sat in an Egyptian prison in Genesis 40-41. We read of no complaints or murmurings from Joseph, although he certainly would have been hard-pressed to understand the working of God in his life at that point.

3. If you can rejoice in even the most difficult and unfair situation, then you know that the gospel is real in your life and that you certainly have the Holy Spirit indwelling for such an attitude is not natural to fallen man. We love to whine, complain and to throw ourselves pity parties. But once this secret has been mastered, then great spiritual profit will be enjoyed. It will come to the point that the world will throw their best at you to try to get you to “curse God and die” (Job 2:9). But once they realize that you have overcome such world trials, there is nothing more they can do to you, except kill you. And you can do this because “the joy of the Lord is your strength” (Nehemiah 8:10),

4. Peter would say the same thing in 1 Peter 1:6,7 “Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”

5. And in case you need to hear it again, Paul will repeat this same exhortation in Philippians 4:4.

6. One Christian who would have understood and obeyed Paul’s admonition would be Samuel Rutherford. He also was in jail facing a death sentence, yet he penned 365 letters (that we have) that are full of praise to Christ and rejoicing under the most difficult of situations. Every Christian should have the *Letters of Samuel Rutherford* in his library.

**B. 3:1 “safe”**

1. “Some hearers are like the Athenian academicians; they want continually to hear something new. The apostle says, “To have the same things written to you, is safe.” So is it for you, dear friends; to have the same gospel, the same Jesus, the same Holy Spirit, made known to you, is safe. New doctrine is dangerous doctrine (Charles Spurgeon, *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, 39:434).”

2. You also have to repeat truth, for our minds do not catch the truth at the first hearing, and our memories are slippery.

C. "The sudden break between 3:1 and 3:2 can be...explained in one of two ways.

1. As Paul was writing, fresh news may have come of trouble at Philippi; and there and then he may have interrupted his line of thought to deal with it.
2. The simplest explanation is this. Philippians is a personal letter and a personal letter is never logically ordered like a treatise. In such a letter we put things down as they come into our heads; we chat on paper with our friends; and an association of ideas which may be clear enough to us may not be so obvious to anyone else. The sudden change of subject here is just the kind of thing which might occur in any such letter (William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible, Philippians, Colossians and Thessalonians*, pages 7-8)."

**D. 3:2 "concision"**

1. Strong's #2699 *katatomê*; *kata* (Strong's #2596) according to; and *temnô*, to cut; to cut up, mutilation.
  - a. Used only here in the New Testament
  - b. The kindred verb occurs in the Septuagint only, of mutilations forbidden by the Mosaic law (Leviticus 21:5).
2. Instead of going in with the circumcised crowd who understand nothing about grace (the Judaizers, the "concision" and "evil workers" of 3:2), Paul points out that we (saved Jews) are of the circumcision which worship God and rejoice in Christ. The circumcision of the heart was the true circumcision, not the mere concision of the flesh.

**E. We are to beware of three things:**

1. **Dogs.** Not necessarily literal dogs but this is a term for false teachers, especially (but not limited to) the Judaizers, who were a source of constant irritation to Paul. To call a man a dog in these days was about as bad of an insult as there was. The Jews referred to Gentiles as "dogs" in their racial contempt of them.
2. "Men tend to be like dogs:
  - a. Dogs eat their own vomit (2 Peter 2:22). These Judaizers went back to the vomit of legalism for their justification after they had been saved by faith.
  - b. Some men are like collies- slow, patient, kind, lovable, gentle and friendly
  - c. Some men are like chihuahuas- snappy, irritable, nervous, noisy, wild-eyed, cowardly and a nuisance
  - d. Some men are like English bulldogs- slow, tenacious, stubborn, ugly, good natured and gentle
  - e. Some men are like French poodles- dainty, prissy, showy, high-strung
  - f. Some men are like bull mastiffs- small, solid, tough, dependable, brave and common looking
  - g. Some men are like Great Danes- large, fearful looking, muscular, slow and not to bright
  - h. Some men are like German Shepherds- alert, strong, powerful, aggressive, quick, brutal (Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on Galatians-Colossians*, pages 417-418)."
  - i. Oriental dogs were nothing like the domesticated pets of today. They roamed the countryside in herds, without home or owner, feeding on the refuse and filth of the streets, quarrelling among themselves and attacking passers-by. What a picture of false teachers!
3. **Evil workers.** This would include false teachers, Judaizers, apostates, enemies of the gospel, peddlers of sin, etc.
4. **The concision.** This has reference to those who mark their own bodies or who cut off certain things from their bodies for religious reasons. The Judaizers are in mind as they

continued to insist Christians be circumcised and keep the law of Moses, even after they were saved by grace (Acts 15). These men put more spiritual value on their circumcision than they did on salvation by faith. They would rather have you circumcised than simply believing.

**F. Four characteristics of genuine believers:**

1. We are of the true circumcision, the circumcision of the heart, not physical circumcision of Israel.
2. We worship God in the Spirit, not the flesh
  - a. God is a Spirit and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth- John 4:24
  - b. He is not to be worshipped in the flesh or in carnal manners
3. We rejoice in Christ, not in ritual or the flesh
  - a. We rejoice in spiritual things, like church attendance, prayer meetings, church services...
  - b. One who despises these things is not saved, period!
4. We have no confidence in the flesh or in religious ritual
  - a. We do not rely on the flesh or in human means for spiritual growth
  - b. We rely on
    - i. Prayer
    - ii. Bible reading
    - iii. Meditation
    - iv. Communion

G. Why should we have any confidence in the flesh? What has the flesh (the old Adamic nature) ever done for us except given us trouble? What have we ever accomplished in the flesh that was of any spiritual or eternal worth? We are never encouraged to glory in the flesh or to promote the flesh, but rather to crucify it.

1. The flesh is weak- Matthew 24:22
2. There is no good thing in the flesh- Romans 7:18
3. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God- Romans 8:8
4. If we live after the flesh, we shall die- Romans 8:13
5. Make no provision for the flesh- Romans 13:14
6. No flesh is to glory in the presence of God- 1 Corinthians 1:29
7. The flesh cannot bring perfection- Galatians 3:3
8. The flesh and spirit are contrary to each other- Galatians 5:17
9. The flesh is to be crucified- Galatians 5:24
10. Sowing to the flesh brings corruption- Galatians 6:8
11. We are to have no confidence in the flesh- Philippians 3:3
12. All flesh is as grass- 1 Peter 1:24

**H. 3:3 “no confidence in the flesh”**

1. As compared to the crowd in 3:2. The dogs, evil workers and the “conscience” all practice fleshly Christianity. They gear their message and ministry to the flesh. They have a works-based salvation (which is carnal, being based on human effort) and a carnal mode of practice. They talk about attendance, money, facilities, “your best life now”, “something good is going to happen to you”, physical healing, raises, debt elimination, positive confession, “name it and claim it/blab it and grab it”, holy debt elimination and divine mortgage burnings, anything that appeals to the carnal, physical part of man.

- a. True religion is geared towards spiritual truth and spiritual blessings. We do not reduce God down to a “Santa Claus” figure, whose sole purpose for

existence is to bless us with a lot of material junk. Yet the carnal-based religion will always be more popular and more successful than a spiritual faith because the flesh-based faith promises you your reward NOW while Biblical religion puts the blessings later.

**3:4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:**

**3:5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;**

**3:6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.**

**XVI. Paul's Autobiography 3:4-6**

**A. 3:4 "trust"**

1. The perfect tense shows an absolute, final trust, as for salvation, that nothing could shake or even add to. Sometimes, those who rely on a works-based plan of salvation can be arrogant in their assurance of their salvation based on their works. This is spiritual pride, that has corrupted their thinking.

**B. 3:4 "I more"**

1. If anyone had any basis to boast in the accomplishments of his flesh, it would be Paul. He had more academic qualifications than any 10 modern preachers put together and accomplished more in his life than most preachers could ever hope to. Paul will list some of those "accomplishments" in verses 5 and 6. The Jews put all their confidence in the flesh, in the fact that they were Jews and that they kept the Law.

**C. 3:5 "circumcised"**

1. Like any good Jew, on the 8<sup>th</sup> day after he was born.  
2. Paul was a Jew by birth and pedigree. Paul was so Jewish you could say he was from the very center of such stock. Converts to Judaism were circumcised in adulthood. Ishmaelites were circumcised at age 13. But Paul was a pure-blooded Jew, circumcised when he was eight days old. He mentions this as he mentions his "stock"- he was not a mongrel nor a half-breed Jew but was all Jewish with no Gentile mixtures.

**D. 3:5 "tribe of Benjamin"**

1. There would be a certain amount of pride in that, seeing that Saul, the first King of Israel, came from that tribe, even if Benjamin was the smallest tribe. In one way, it would be like saying you were from Rhode Island. Despite any great people that would have come from Rhode Island, there would always be a stigma that you hailed from the smallest state in the union.  
2. Paul may have been named after King Saul.

**E. 3:5 "Hebrew of the Hebrews"**

1. Of Hebrew parents who retained the characteristic qualities in language and custom as distinct from the Hellenistic Jews.

**F. 3:5 "Pharisee"**

1. A Jewish sect that seems to have started after the Babylonian exile. In addition to Old Testament books the Pharisees recognized in oral tradition a standard of belief and life. They sought for distinction and praise by outward observance of external rites and by outward forms of piety, and such as ceremonial washings, fastings, prayers, and alms giving; and, comparatively negligent of genuine piety, they prided themselves on their fancied good works. They held strenuously to a belief in the existence of good and evil angels, and to the expectation of a Messiah; and they cherished the hope that the dead,

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after a preliminary experience either of reward or of penalty in Hades, would be recalled to life by him, and be requited each according to his individual deeds. In opposition to the usurped dominion of the Herods and the rule of the Romans, they stoutly upheld the theocracy and their country's cause, and possessed great influence with the common people. According to Josephus they numbered more than 6000. They were bitter enemies of Jesus and his cause; and were in turn severely rebuked by him for their avarice, ambition, hollow reliance on outward works, and affection of piety in order to gain popularity.

### **G. 3:6 "zeal"**

1. Strong's #2205 *zelos*; excitement of mind, ardor, fervor of spirit.
2. Paul was about as zealous in his observation of the law as you could get. His zeal in persecuting those who did not hold to the law as equally as strong. He was a "Jesuit among the Catholics" in his zeal.
3. The Jews placed a high value on religious zeal, which is why Jews who become Christians can usually outwork any three Gentiles combined.

### **H. 3:6 "persecuting"**

1. The extent of Paul's zeal for the law drove him to persecute the church without mercy, as seen in Acts 8 and 9.

### **I. 3:6 "blameless"**

1. Humanly speaking, you couldn't fault Paul in his observance or zealousness of the Law or of the precepts of Judaism. None of the Judaizers could claim this. Certainly, none of the Gentiles could either. But if Paul would not boast in his fleshly religious achievements, then why should anyone else do any bragging in the flesh?
2. "Before you got saved, you had a little stick horse religion that you used to gallop around the house and you pretended that it was a live horse. You watered it and curried it and trotted it to the 'sacraments' and put it through its paces for the grandstand. When an intelligent person called it to your attention that it was a dead stick, you became quite put out (if not infuriated) and you baptized it, fed it and placed it on top of a table where it would be higher than any dead stick in the room. You were highly indignant about people attacking your stick and insisted that in 'freedom-loving America' people should 'respect each other's faith'...Then one day you found Jesus Christ, as Paul did, and the stick horse was thrown in the river where the DUNG eventually winds up!" (Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on Galatians-Philippians*. page 422)
3. "'Like most 'religious' people today, Paul had enough morality to keep him out of trouble, but not enough righteousness to get him into heaven! It was not bad things that kept Paul away from Jesus—it was good things! He had to lose his 'religion' to find salvation. (Warren Wiersbe, *Be Joyful*)".

**3:7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.**

**3:8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,**

**3:9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:**

**3:10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;**

**3:11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.**

### **XVII. Paul's Personal Desire 3:7-11**

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A. Verses 7 and 8 are the heart of the book of Philippians. These verses are like a staircase, starting in 3:7 and culminating at the peak in 3:11.

### **B. 3:7 “gain to me”**

1. Anything spiritual (as in religious) or secular. Paul took a full and complete inventory of his life to see what was there.

### **C. 3:7 “counted”**

As an accountant working on his ledger. He would sit down and draw up two columns. One column would be of things that were valuable and desirable, in a worldly sense (the seven items in 3:5,6). In the other column would be those things that were valuable in an eternal, spiritual sense. Then he would add up the figures in those columns and every time he did, the value of the eternal and spiritual items always was infinitely more than the value of the worldly items. All his worldly attainments (and they were many) were not to be compared to what he could gain by winning Christ! All his Jewish religious attainments and privileges were worth nothing in the light of Christ. This also shows that Paul, in coming to this conclusion, had not done so carelessly or in the heat of passion, but through a calm, careful reckoning. Paul had truly “counted the cost” in drawing up these accounts.

### **D. 3:7,8 “loss”**

1. Strong’s #2209 *zêmia*; damage, loss.

2. This has the idea as applied to trade, a voluntary loss of a merchant casting his cargo overboard in order to lighten his ship. It was used by Luke in Acts 27:10 to describe Paul’s shipwreck. Paul is like a sea-captain who in time of war, for patriotic reasons jettisons his cargo, thereby lightening his ship so that it will have the speed needed to overtake and capture the enemy’s vessel that contains a far more precious treasure. Paul voluntarily suffered great personal loss to follow Christ.

3. Paul was willing to give it all up for Christ, regardless of what it was or what its value or use to him was. The only thing that mattered to Paul was apprehending Christ. None of Paul’s fleshly attainments was important anymore now that he was a Christian. Of what value were the things of the flesh now that he had the riches of Christ? Why boast in your flesh when you have the spirit of Christ?

4. “I have suffered the loss of all things” He had lost financial stability - at one time he had doubtless lived an affluent life; he could not have studied at Tarsus University, nor moved later in Pharisaical and Sanhedrin circles unless he and his family were quite well-to-do. Now he was a poor man, often, for his livelihood, depending upon his craft of tent-making, Acts 18:3, and sometimes reduced to accepting gifts from his friends for his provision, 4:11-12. He had lost physical comfort - it would appear that, from the time of his conversion, he was cut off from his family, for they are never mentioned, and he was condemned to a life of privation and suffering such as has fallen to the lot of few. Read his own account of it, in II Corinthians 11:23-28 - “labors, stripes, prisons, rods, stoned, shipwreck, journeyings, perils, weariness,” Where was the comfort that once he knew? Does not the list make you a little ashamed, that your Christian adherence causes you so little distress? Do you not think that a bit of persecution, in these days of ease, would perhaps waken us up, tighten us up, smarten us up into something nearer to the virility of the first believers? He had lost great reputation - the Scribes of the day would look upon this brilliant young man as one of the most promising of their coming leaders; he would be held in high esteem by all who recognized the values belonging to the upright Jewish faith. Now he is regarded, and treated, as “the offscouring of all things (Guy King, *Joy Way*).”

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5. Paul was also willing to suffer the loss of all things, including all of his earthly possessions and honors, if he could only win Christ. That Paul had experienced. Winning Christ- winning a person, was more important to Paul than winning the wealth and honor of the world. The world wants to win things. The Christian wants to win a person.

### **E. 3:8 “excellency”**

1. Strong’s #5242 *huperechô*; from *huper* (Strong’s #5228) above; and *echô* (Strong’s #2192) have, hold; to have or hold over one, to stand out, rise above, overtop, to be above, be superior in rank, authority, power, to excel, to be superior, better than, to surpass.

2. This is not just “knowing” about Christ in some academic or religious manner, but a personal, intimate knowledge of His person. Paul was not content with just knowing about Christ but knowing Him as deeply as it was humanly possible to know Him.

3. “No religion desires “the excellency of the knowledge” of its FOUNDER. Not even an orthodox Jew is “gung ho” about knowing Moses as a person; his teachings—yes, his precepts—yes, his writings—perhaps, but HIM? No Buddhist has to have any knowledge about Buddha’s present condition as a person in order to know anything. No Confucian studies Confucius’ present state as a person, and no Mohammedan wastes five minutes to attain a knowledge of Mohammed as he NOW lives. The phenomenon is unique to Bible-believing Christianity, and there is nothing like it in Roman Catholicism or Liberal Protestantism. (Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on Philippians*).”

### **F. 3:8 “knowledge”**

1. Strong’s #1108 *gnosis*; knowledge signifies in general intelligence, understanding, the deeper more perfect and enlarged knowledge of this religion, such as belongs to the more advanced.

2. There is no higher knowledge, no more noble field of study for a human than to study the person and the work of Jesus Christ. All other fields of study cannot compare with the study of Christology.

### **G. 3:8 “dung”**

1. Strong’s #4657 *skubalon*; any refuse, as the excrement of animals, off-scourings, rubbish, dregs, of things worthless and detestable, that which is thrown to the dogs. Frequently used in medical writings where it has the idea of “excrement”.

2. It also referred to food gone bad, scraps left over after a meal, and refuse. In extra-biblical Greek it describes a half-eaten corpse and lumps of manure.

3. “The word is used of persons and things to denote pitiful and horrible remains, a corpse half-eaten by fishes...The choice of the vulgar term stresses the force and totality of Paul’s renunciation of his former life (Gerald Kittle, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* 7:445-446).”

4. Used only here in the New Testament.

5. The post-apostolic fathers do not use the word.

6. “Dung” is the proper word for this context. The delights and glories of this world meant absolutely nothing to Paul- they were less than worthless to him. Naturally, such rough language is offensive to modern ears (and heaven only knows why, considering the filth Americans willingly listen to daily on radio and television), so the modern translations have to scrub up the language. In so doing, they destroy the force of Paul’s idea.

7. Consider the other English versions and how they translate the word:

a. New King James, New American Standard, New International, Amplified, American Standard, Philips, New American Bible, ESV-“rubbish”

b. New English, Today’s English Version- “garbage”

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- c. Living Bible- "less than nothing"
  - d. New World Translation, Revised Standard- "refuse"
  - e. The Bishops Bible uses "vile".
  - f. Interestingly, the Douay Version and English Revised Version-1881 keep the correct word, although the Revised Version has the weaker reading in the margin. The Recovery Version also maintains the rendering.
8. Many of the commentaries are no better;
- a. Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers- "refuse".
  - b. Albert Barnes- "dregs; refuse; what is thrown away as worthless; chaff; offal, or the refuse of a table or of slaughtered animals, and then filth of any kind."
  - c. Jamieson-Fausset-Brown- "refuse".
  - d. Matthew Poole- "dogs', meat, refuse cast to the dogs".
  - e. John Gill- "dog's meat".
  - f. Meyer's New Testament Commentary- "rubbish, refuse".
  - g. Expositor's Greek New Testament- "refuse".
  - h. Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges- "refuse".
  - i. Bengel's *Gnomen of the New Testament*- "any worthless thing, that is to be cast away, such as the excrements of animals, the dregs and grounds of liquors, the dross of metals, what falls from plants, the refuse of the crops, the bran of meal, the crumbs of the table, the wiping of the hands, which are destined for the dogs."
  - j. Pulpit Commentary- "refuse, dog's meat".
  - k. M. R. Vincent's *Word Studies*- "refuse. Either excrement or what is thrown away from the table; leavings. The derivation is uncertain. According to some it is a contraction from ἐς κύνας βάλλω to throw to the dogs."
  - l. Harry Ironside does not discuss the word in his commentary.
  - m. Guy King (*Joy Way*) does not discuss the word.
  - n. A. T. Robertson- "to fling to the dogs and so refuse of any kind."
  - o. William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible*- "that which is thrown to the dogs; and in medical language it means excrement".
  - p. *People's New Testament* does not discuss the word.
  - q. Ethelbert Bullinger, in the *Companion Bible*, does not discuss the word.
  - r. William Barclay does not discuss the word in his *Daily Study Bible*.
  - s. J. Vernon McGee does not discuss the word.
  - t. John Phillips does not discuss the word.
  - u. Kenneth Wuest does not discuss the word.
  - v. Leslie Grant uses "refuse"
  - w. Henry Morris uses "refuse" in his *Defender's Study Bible*
9. Commentators who do not attack the traditional reading of "dung":
- 1. A. C. Gaebelien, *Annotated Bible*
  - 2. Thomas Constable, *Constable Study Notes*- "The Greek word translated "rubbish" (skybalon) occurs only here in the New Testament. Its derivation is uncertain, but it appears to have referred to excrement, food gone bad, scraps left over after a meal, and refuse. In extra-biblical Greek it describes a half-eaten corpse and lumps of manure." (close enough)
  - 3. John Trapp- "Dog's dung (as some interpret the word σκυβαλα, quasi κυσιβαλα), or dog's meat, coarse and contemptible." (close enough)
  - 4. Peter Ruckman
  - 5. Oliver B. Greene



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10. It is not mere garbage or refuse- the word is much stronger- excrement! Offal! That is what this world is worth in the eyes of the Christian- that is, if he is in the right relationship with the Lord! A Christian who puts any value on anything the flesh or the world has to offer is backslidden.

### **H. 3:8 “win Christ”**

1. Winning Christ would be like winning a reward for faithful service. Win Christ as a soldier wins a medal or an athlete wins a laurel crown. This "awarding" of Christ unto the faithful Christian no doubt occurs at the bema.

2. So how do we win Christ?

a. Get to know Him personally 3:10

i. Only possible through much time spent with Christ in:

a. Prayer

b. Communion

c. Meditation

d. Scripture reading

b. Claim His resurrection power for your life 3:10

1. As Christ was raised from the dead after His death unto His glorified body, so must we also die to self and claim that new life that helps us to lead a true Christian life

a. Crucified with Christ- Galatians 2:20

b. Reckon ourselves to be dead- Romans 6:11

c. "I die daily"- 1 Corinthians 15:31

c. Suffering for Christ 3:10 (there go the Charismatics and 95% of American Christians!)

1. Fellowship brings a fellowship that nothing else can

d. By dying daily- Galatians 2:20

1. Dying to sin

2. Dying to self

3. Dying to the world

e. By a life of discipleship and following Christ

1. Following Christ

2. Seeking and doing His will

f. Forget the past 3:13

1. Of past failures

g. Reach and press forward 3:13,14

### **I. Paul's desires:**

1. To win Christ 3:8

2. To be found in Christ 3:9

3. To know Christ 3:10

4. To know the power of His resurrection 3:10

5. To know the fellowship of His sufferings 3:10

6. To be made conformable to His death 3:10

7. To attain to the resurrection of the dead 3:11

8. Why would Paul have such desires? Because he had seen God and had received revelations and dealings with God. Such encounters with God will change the value system of any genuine Christian. The reason why so many Christians have never made such a similar estimation in their own lives is because they had not seen Christ as Paul had.

### **J. 3:9 “be found in Him”**

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1. The thought is difficult to put into words. We are all in Christ positionally as a result of our salvation, but Paul is on to something deeper. Paul literally wants to be fully and totally immersed into the person of Christ. Paul wanted that unique deep and intimate relationship with Christ that so few Christians ever find. Oh, what a precious place to be found in, “in him,” trusting in him, hidden away in him, a member of his body, as it were, losing myself in him!

2. Paul's desire was to be “in” Christ, fully, entirely, completely. All Christians are “in Christ” positionally by virtue of the New Birth, but not all Christians are “in Christ” practically and experientially. Many Christians are “near” Christ and “around” Christ but are not actually “in Christ”. I was born into a military family, but I never actually joined the military. I was raised “around” the military and was “near” the military when I was younger, but I never joined the military, so I was never “in” the military. Thus, many professors are “near” Christ in that they are born into a Christian home or attend Church, but until they are actually born again, they are not “in” Christ.

3. We can extend this metaphor further and make an application to Christians. We may be “in Christ” through salvation but not really have our hearts “in Christ”. Back to the military. Let's go back to the Vietnam era when the draft was active. You may have been drafted into the military and then sent to Vietnam, but you hate it. Your heart is not in it. You are “in” the military, but your heart certainly is not. How many Christians are actually “in Christ” but their heart is not? Being “in Christ” is not a reality to these backsliders and nominal believers.

### **K. 3:9 “righteousness”**

1. A Jewish understanding of righteousness that also is held by many unsaved, that if I “keep the Golden Rule” or the Sabbath or the dietary laws or if I am a “good person” then I will be counted as righteous and will go to heaven. But Paul says while that may comprise his righteousness, the righteousness of God is not to be found internal to ourselves, nor is it based upon our works or upon our faithfulness to the law but is to be found only upon Christ.

### **M. 3:9 “faith of Christ”**

1. Not “faith in Christ” but through the faith “of” Christ. Our righteousness is not even based upon our believing upon Christ but is based upon the imputed righteousness that Christ gives to us based upon His own faith and righteousness, not our own. We are not justified by faith “in Christ” but by the faith “of Christ”. It is not our faith that justifies us but rather the faith of Christ which is imputed on our behalf at the new birth. Faith in Christ saves us but it is the faith of Christ that justifies us. This is a spiritual benefit no Old Testament saint had, for his own faith was important in his eventual justification before God, but not so with the New Testament saint.

2. The only other place where the phrase “faith of Christ” is used is in Galatians 2:16.

### **N. 3:10 “know Him”**

1. With the intensity Paul had to know Christ, I am surprised that he used the aorist tense instead of the perfect tense here, and that he only used the word “ginosko” instead of the more intensive word “epiginosko”.

2. Not to simply know about Christ but to know Him personally and intimately. I know the President of the United States in the sense I know who he is and would recognize him on the street, but that knowledge will not get me into the White House. Many people know about Christ in that they know who He is, but that knowledge will not get them into heaven. Rather, we need that very deep, very personal, very intimate relationship with Christ that again, so few Christians ever attain to. So many believers are content to dwell in the outer court of the tabernacle, never approaching the Holy of Holies. They

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are content to know Christ historically and even theologically, but not personally and experientially. They are “outer-court worshippers”. They can say with Paul, “That I may win him and be found in him “that they do want; but this higher wish, “That I may know him,” has not stirred their hearts. How many brethren we know, who are content to know Christ’s historic life! They read the evangelists and they are charmed with the beauty of the Savior’s history. They know all the incidents of his life, from his manger to his cross; but they do not know Him.

3. Paul didn’t want the things that he could get from Christ, but he wanted to know Him!

4. Some things Paul did not want:

- a. To have a huge church or to baptize 300 a year.
- b. To be a “nationally known” evangelist.
- c. To be invited to preach at some national conference.
- d. To have his sermons published in the *Sword of the Lord* or to be promoted by the same.
- e. To be invited to the White House or get his picture taken with the president.
- f. To be invited to open the state legislature or town council in prayer.
- g. To be a best-selling Christian author.

5. No, this “one thing” he wanted above all was to “know Him!” An intimate and personal knowledge and relationship with Christ trumps all. If it doesn’t, we have idols in our heart.

6. We know a lot of things and a lot of stuff, but do we know Him? What profit is it if you speak Greek or Latin if you do not know Him? What profit is it if you have the largest church in your state if you don’t know Him? What will it benefit you if you should gain the whole (Christian) world if you are ignorant of Him or have no walk or knowledge of Him?

7. How can we show that we “know Him”? If we keep His commandments- 1 John 2:3.

8. "Imagine for a moment that you are living in the age of the Roman emperors. You have been captured by Roman soldiers...you have been sold as a slave, stripped, whipped, branded, imprisoned and treated with shameful cruelty. At last you are appointed to die in the amphitheatre, to make holiday for a tyrant. The populace assemble with delight...You stand alone, naked, armed only with a single dagger- a poor defense against gigantic beasts...But what is this?...A deliverer appears. A great unknown leaps from among the gazing multitude, and confronts the savage monster. He quails not at the roaring of the devourer, but dashes upon him with terrible fury, till, like a whipped cur, the lion slinks towards his den...The hero lifts you up, smiles...whispers comfort in you ear and bids you be of good courage, for you are free. Do you not think that there would arise at once in your heart a desire to know your deliverer?...Who was my deliverer, that I may fall at his feet and bless him?' You are not, however, informed, but instead of it you are gently led away to a noble mansion house where your many wounds are washed and healed...You are clothed in sumptuous apparel; you are made to sit down at a feast...you rest upon the softest down. The next morning you are attended by servants who guard you from evil and minister to your good. Day after day, week and week, your wants are supplied...There is nothing that you can ask which you do not receive. I am sure that your curiosity would grow more and more intense till it would ripen into an insatiable craving. You would scarcely neglect an opportunity of asking the servants. 'Tell me, who does all this, who is my noble benefactor, for I must know him?' 'Well, but' they would say, 'is it not enough for you that you are delivered from the lion?' 'Nay,' say you, 'it is for that I pant to know him.' 'Your wants are richly supplied- why are you vexed by curiosity as to the hand which reaches you the

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boon?'...'It is because I have no wants that...my soul longs and yearns...that I may know my generous loving friend.'" (Spurgeon, "Do You Know Him?" in *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, 10:61-62, sermon 552).

### **O. 3:10 "power"**

1. Strong's #1411 dunamis; strength power, ability, inherent power, power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature, or which a person or thing exerts and puts forth
2. There are a number of these kinds of "powers" in Scripture:
  - a. The gospel is the power of god unto salvation- Romans 1:16
  - b. Principality and powers- Romans 8:38; Ephesians 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Colossians 1:16; 2:10,15; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 3:22
  - c. Higher powers- Romans 13:1-3
  - d. The preaching of the cross- 1 Corinthians 1:18
  - e. Christ is the power of God- 1 Corinthians 1:24
  - f. The resurrection body is raised in power- 1 Corinthians 15:43
  - g. Prince of the power of the air- Ephesians 2:2
  - h. The power of the resurrection- Philippians 3:10
  - i. Power of darkness- Colossians 1:13
  - j. Powers of the world to come- Hebrews 6:5
  - k. Power of an endless life- Hebrews 7:16

### **P. 3:10 "resurrection"**

1. The resurrection power of Christ! Paul desired to know it in a practical and experimental way, not merely in a theological or intellectual way.
2. How powerful was the resurrection? Powerful enough to redeem billions of sinners, to send martyrs willingly to the stake, to send missionaries to the ends of the earth, for men to devote their entire lives, fortunes and energies to the study of one book, to completely change and transform the wickedest of sinners. Paul wanted to know something about that power! He didn't want to just read about it- he wanted to see it and experience it in his own life.
  - a. It is the only power powerful enough to change a human heart from sin to holiness
    - i. Salvation is only by the power of God- John 1:12,13
    - ii. What else could turn men like Matthew (a thief) or Paul (a blasphemer and persecutor) into the Christian men they became?
  - b. It is powerful enough to change an atheist to a believer
    - i. Think about men like Robert Anderson, who was an unbeliever and who set out to disprove Christianity by dismissing the resurrection. By the end of his studies, he became a Christian and wrote a number of books defending the authenticity and inspiration of the book of Daniel. Lee Strobel would be another example.
  - c. It is powerful enough to shut the mouths of the foolish
    - i. The story is given in the old Soviet Union where a Christian church had been established in a small village. The State sent out one of its atheist apologists to the village to convince the villagers regarding the errors of their faith. With the village gathered in the square, the atheist ranged for over an hour about the folly of the gospel. When he was finished, the village pastor went to the platform, held up his Bible and simply declared "He is risen!" And the crowd responded, "He is risen indeed!" That ended the meeting.
  - d. The preaching of the resurrection built the Church in the book of Acts.

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i. Acts 2:24-32; 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40,41; 13:30-37; 17:31,32; 23:6-8; 24:15,21; 25:19; 26:8,23

e. It delivers us from the power, penalty and presence of sin forever through our gaining a glorified body after our resurrection

f. It brings immortality in gaining a body that is free from the laws of physical death and suffering.

i. It guarantees that there is a life to come and that death does not end all.

3. The only way to experience the power of the resurrection is to first die! We must die to self, sin and the world. Only then can the power of the Spirit of God raise us up to new life through the spiritual resurrection. But unless you have died to the things of this world, you cannot experience this power. Thus, there are many a worldly Christian who knows nothing of this power. It involves living a crucified life, where we are daily dying and putting to death the flesh.

### **Q. 3:10 “sufferings”**

1. The Tyndale, Coverdale and Bishops Bibles have “passions” and the Geneva Bible uses “afflictions”.

2. Suffering does produce a camaraderie among fellow sufferers. Get a group of Marines or soldiers together and before long, they will start to swap their stories about boot camp. Their common sufferings produce a common bond. So it is in the Christian life. Those who have had doors slammed in their face, had the police called on their street meetings, had snowballs thrown at them, know a little something about the special level of fellowship with the Lord and with similar saints that suffering produces. The armchair Christian and the worldly compromiser know nothing of this kind of fellowship.

3. Suffering also draws us closer to God. One way to really develop an intimate relationship with God is to suffer for Him. The martyrs (those who died and those who survived their sufferings) had a relationship with God that no one else may know.

### **R. 3:10 “conformable”**

1. Strong’s #4833 *summorphoō*; to be conformed to, receive the same form as.

2. Used only here in the New Testament.

3. Paul wanted to live and die as a Christian. It used to be said of the Methodists "See how good the Methodists die" (but not true of this modern crowd!). A good life spent in and for Christ produces a good death that honors the Lord. You can't live bad and die good. Our lives are spent in preparation for death. The student will spend four years in class to prepare him for his graduation day. The saint will spend the years of his Christian life in preparation for his graduation day to glory. God does give His children the grace to grow old gracefully and to die as a Christian.

### **S. 3:10 “by any means”**

1. Short of sinning, of course. This spiritual quest was so important to Paul that it became all-consuming and he was willing to anything, give up anything and pay any price to attain to these things.

### **T. 3:10 “attain to the resurrection of the dead”**

1. Paul would do this, of course, as will every Christian. This has the thought that Paul did not want to stumble into heaven backwards as a carnal saint might, but that he wanted to be practically and horizontally worthy to be included in the resurrection of the just. How useful are you to the Kingdom of God? The idea is to try to make yourself as useful and as irreplaceable as possible, humanly speaking. Justify yourself in the sense James says. God saved you, now prove you were worth saving by a holy life.

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2. Some will have a better resurrection than others. All believers will be resurrected but those who truly walked with God will be raised to a better one and have a better bema judgment and will receive more rewards and receive a higher position in the Kingdom.
3. Hebrews 11:35 talks about desiring to obtain a "better resurrection". Everyone, saved and lost, will be resurrected one day but there are different types of resurrections.
4. The lost receive a resurrection unto damnation at the Great White Throne judgment in Revelation 20.
5. There are degrees of reward for the saint at the judgment seat. We all will be saved but some will receive more rewards and more honor by the Lord at that judgment, depending of what sort of works they had (1 Corinthians 3:13).
6. There will be multiple resurrections as the Bible does not teach a general resurrection (usually by a misinterpretation of the Judgment of the Nations in Matthew 25). The Bible speaks of a "first resurrection" in Revelation 20:5,6. If there is a "first resurrection", it presupposes a second one after that.

**3:12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.**

**3:13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,**

**3:14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.**

**3:15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.**

**3:16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.**

### **XVIII. Apprehending and Pressing Forward 3:12-16**

#### **A. Paul's spiritual status:**

1. Paul had not yet attained 3:12
2. Paul was not yet perfect 3:12
3. Paul had not yet apprehended 3:13

#### **B. Paul's resolutions (to "attain" and to be "perfect" spiritually):**

1. Follow after to that he may apprehend 3:12
2. That he may be apprehended of Christ 3:12
3. Forget those things that are behind 3:13
4. Reaching forth unto those things that are before 3:13
5. Pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. 3:14

#### **C. 3:12 "attained"**

1. "attained" Strong's #2983 lambano, to take, a different word than used in 3:16, which see.
2. Paul had not yet arrived in 3:12,13! Paul had not yet attained his "second blessing" or his "baptism of the Holyghost (as the Pentecostals and Charismatics pronounce it, as one word, with emphasis on the "holy")", despite 20 or so years of apostolic preaching, mission work and church planting. When would Paul finally get his sin nature eradicated? As of the time of the writing of Romans 7, he hadn't. We naturally reject Pentecostal ideas about "baptism of the Holyghost" or second blessings or eradications of the old man. We won't drop our sin nature until we take up our glorified body. Paul was still in the race. He would cross the finish line until his head dropped in the basket in the Roman dungeon after 2 Timothy 4. You never will "attain" to your spiritual hopes and

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aspirations in this life, but you should always be trying and making progress toward that goal!

3. "When I hear a man crow about himself, I think of Peter's declaration- 'Though all men should deny thee yet will not I' and I hear another cock crow...I have now become very suspicious of all who cry up their own wares' (Charles Spurgeon, "Onward!" in *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, 19:304,305 sermon 1114)

4. You never attain, you never complete the quest, you never reach your goal in this life. You never quit pressing forward. To reach a state of spiritual contentment is to develop spiritual pride. You convince yourself that you have "arrived" and this somehow makes you better than other people and you imagine yourself to have some special spiritual privileges with God that other people do not have. You think that because you are so spiritually advanced that you can sin and not be judged or if you do sin, then God will automatically forgive it and He will not disqualify you from your ministry since you are so "important" and "vital" and God just can't afford to lose you.

a. This is what may have happened to Jack Hyles after his "wife swapping" was exposed in the 1990s. Instead of acknowledging his sins, he went on the offensive and claimed that if he fell, fundamentalism (his twisted version of it) would fall with him. No spiritual or humble man would have thought that way or would have reacted in that manner.

i. The success of many musicians, artists, preachers, masters, etc., contents them, and instead of being an inspiration is a stultification (W. L. Watkinson, cited in *The Biblical Illustrator*, notes on Philippians 3:12)."

b. How do we "press on" and attempt to attain? We should always be pressing onward in an attempt to continually improve ourselves spiritually.

i. "Give attendance to reading" 1 Timothy 4:13

ii. "Pray without ceasing" 1 Thessalonians 5:17

iii. "Flee fornication" 1 Corinthians 6:18

iv. "Take heed unto thy word" Psalm 119:9

### **D. 3:12,15 "perfect"**

1. Strong's #5046 teleios; brought to its end, finished, wanting nothing necessary to completeness, perfect, full grown, adult, of full age, mature.

2. Not sinless! "Perfect" in the Bible NEVER means "sinless". That is a popular error held by various Pentecostals and Charismatics who are poor Bible students. It has the idea of spiritually mature and complete.

### **E. 3:12 "follow after"**

1. Strong's #1377 diōkō; to make to run or flee, put to flight, drive away, to run swiftly in order to catch a person or thing, to run after, to press on: figuratively of one who in a race runs swiftly to reach the goal, to pursue (in a hostile manner), in any way whatever to harass, trouble, molest one, to persecute, to be mistreated, suffer persecution on account of something, to seek after eagerly, earnestly endeavor to acquire.

2. This is the same word as "press on" in 3:14.

3. "I press on with no discouragement". This would have an idea of effort and labor as spiritual progress is never easy and is not done by the spiritually lazy.

### **F. 3:12 "apprehend"**

1. Strong's #2638 katalambanō; from kata (Strong's #2596) an intensive; and lambanō (Strong's #2983) to take; to lay hold of, to seize upon, take possession of.

2. This is the same word used for "apprehend" and "apprehended" in 3:12 and for "apprehended" in 3:13.

3. This is an intensive word.

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4. Christ apprehended Paul in Acts 9, so Paul merely want to do the same thing with Him!
5. Can you imagine being apprehended by Christ? It would involve several things:
  - a. He desired us enough to take the time and the energy to apprehend us
  - b. It is by grace for there is no good thing in us that would make God want to apprehend us.
  - c. He wants us for His own possession. We are very dear to His heart and desires fellowship and relationship with us more than we do with Him.
6. When God “apprehended” Paul in Acts 9:
  - a. He sought Paul out deliberately and individually
  - b. God had Paul under conviction for a period of time. That started when Paul witnessed the stoning of Stephen. The outcome of that was that Paul increased his persecution of the church to try to drown out that “still small voice” of the conviction of the Holy Spirit.
  - c. When his salvation came, it came suddenly.
  - d. There were fruits and evidences that Paul had been saved- Acts 9:20-22.

### **G. 3:13 “apprehended”**

1. Perfect tense in the Greek, not to have finally “arrived” with no more progress to be made.
2. Paul was not “sinlessly perfect” or “totally sanctified” yet. You’d figure that if any man in the New Testament could have made such a claim, it would have been Paul. Here is a man who took the Gospel to Europe, planted countless churches and wrote scripture, yet by his own admission, still had a long way to go spiritually and was not satisfied with himself in his progress in spiritual things. Who would be? Who would be so vain and so foolish to make such a claim that he had arrived or that he had no room to improve or advance spiritually? Such a man is a fool, proud, vain and quite arrogant and has many spiritual issues that only the Holy Spirit could deal with.
3. “Yet, brethren, far too often of late have I come across the path of those who speak as if they have apprehended, — brethren whose own lips praise them, who descant upon their own fullness of grace, with an unction rather too unctuous for my taste. I am not about to condemn them; I cannot say I am not about to censure them, for I intend to do so, from a deep sense of the necessity that they should be censured. These friends assure us that they have reached great heights of grace and are now in splendid spiritual condition. I should be very glad to know that it is so, if it were true; but I am grieved to hear them act as witnesses for themselves, for then I know that their witness is not true: if it were so, they would be the last men to publish it abroad. There are brethren abroad, whose eminent graciousness is not very clear to others, but it is very evident to themselves; and equally vivid is their apprehension of the great inferiority of most of their brethren. They talk to us, not as men of like passions with ourselves and brethren of the same stock, but as demigods, thundering out of the clouds, giants discoursing to the little men around them. If it be true that they are so superior, I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice; but my suspicion is, that their glorying is not good, and that the spirit which they manifest will prove a snare to them. I meet, I say, sometimes with brethren who feel contented with their spiritual condition. They do not ascribe their satisfactory character to themselves, but to the grace of God; but for all that, they do feel that they are what they ought to be, and what others ought to be but are not. They see in themselves a great deal that is good, very much that is commendable, and a large amount of excellence, which they can hold up for the admiration of others. They have reached the “higher life,” and are wonderfully fond of telling us so, and explaining the



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phenomena of their self-satisfied condition. Though Paul was compelled to say, "In me, that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing," their flesh appears to be of a better quality: whereas he had spiritual conflicts, and found that without were fightings, and within fears, these very superior persons have already trodden Satan under their feet, and reached a state in which they have little else to do but to divide the spoil. Now, brethren, whenever we meet with persons who can congratulate themselves upon their personal character, or whenever we get into the state of self-content ourselves, there is an ill savor about the whole concern. I do not know what impression it makes upon you, but whenever I hear a brother talk about himself, and how full he is of the Spirit of God, and all that, I am distressed for him. I think I hear the voice of that stately professor, who said, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are." I feel that I would prefer to listen to that other man, who said, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and went down to his house justified rather than the other. When I hear a man crow about himself, I think of Peter's declaration — "Though all men should deny thee, yet will not I," and I hear another cock crow. Self-complacency is the mother of spiritual declension...In the presence of a professor who is pleased with his own attainments, one remembers that warning text: "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." Great !! great !! wherever thou art, thou must come down. Great I is always opposed to great Christ. John the Baptist knew the truth when he said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." There is no room in this world for God's glory and man's glory. He who is less than nothing, magnifies God; but he "who is rich, and increased in goods, and hath need of nothing," dishonors God, and he himself "is naked and poor and miserable. Furthermore, we have observed that the best of men do not talk of their attainments; their tone is self-depreciation, not self-content. We have known some eminently holy men, who are now in heaven, and in looking back upon their lives we note that they were never conscious of being what we all thought them to be. Everybody could see their beauty of character except themselves. *They* lamented their imperfections while we admired the grace of God in them...If ever true saints speak of what God has done by them, they do it in such a modest way that you might think they were talking of some one five hundred miles away, rather than of themselves. They have scrupulously laid all their crowns at the Savior's feet, not in word only, but in spirit. When I remember these sacred names of the great departed, I feel it hard to have patience with the unspiritual, unholy boastings of personal holiness and high spirituality, which are getting common in these days. Drums make much noise, but we know by observation that it is not their fullness which makes the sound...We never see the beauty of Christ without at the same time perceiving our own deformity. When we neglect prayer and self-examination we grow mighty vain fellows, but when we live near to God in private devotion and heart-searching, we put off our ornaments from us. In the light of God's countenance, we perceive our many flaws and imperfections, and instead of saying, "I am clean," we cry out, "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips (Charles Spurgeon, "Onward!" *Metropolitan Baptist Tabernacle*, sermon 1114, volume 10, pages 374-376)."

4. You never want to count yourself to have "arrived" or to have "attained". If you could attain "sinless perfection" in this life, then what is left? What can you do next? Where can you go from here? Think of the Apollo astronauts who walked on the moon. What could they do to top that? What do you do after you have walked on the moon? You can't top it so you rest on your laurels, bask in the glow of past achievements or "crack up". It is the same with the arrogant Christian who thinks they have attained sinless perfect (or something similar) on this side of glory. What do you do next and where can you go from here?

**H. 3:13 “this one thing I do”**

1. Not these “twenty things I dabble in”. You can’t allow yourself to get distracted and knocked off your course as you run your race. You may do many things as your duty requires, but always be striving to press forward to the goal of the will of God for your life. Paul had a spiritual focus on the goal in his life and he allowed no distractions.

**I. 3:13 “forgetting those things that are behind”**

1. You can’t live in the past. Some men have never gotten away from the First Great Awakening or the Reformation or from the days when John R. Rice and Jack Hyles walked the earth. They are trapped in the “old days” and are of little spiritual use in the present. Some Pentecostals are always clamoring to repeat the events of Acts 2 but those days are gone, not to return. We must live in the present, with an eye to the future, while learning and respecting the lessons from history. After all, after the Bible, history is our best teacher.

2. This also means that Paul was determined to forget his failures of the past. What is done is done and it cannot be undone. We all have our failures, but it is necessary for us to learn those lessons and profit by them but not to brood over them once they have been confessed and forgiven. One of my teachers, O. Talmadge Spence (who died in 2000) started Foundations Bible College in Dunn, North Carolina in 1974. He bought a potato field along Interstate 95. Someone asked him what he would do if he started out in starting his Bible college, only to have it fail. Spence replied, “I will give that failure to the Lord and move on.” Exactly.

3. Once a foot runner starts his race, he wastes no time looking back toward the starting line. His full and complete attention is focused on the finish line. He is always looking forward, never backward.

**J. 3:13 “reaching forth”**

1. 13d Strong’s #1901 *epekteinomai*; from *epi* (Strong’s #1909) an intensive; and *ekteinō* (Strong’s #1614) to stretch out; to stretch out to or towards.

2. Used only here in the New Testament.

K. Verse 14 is a good verse for a new year’s sermon or resolution, to forget the failures, sins and shortcomings of the past year and to resolve to seek spiritual improvement in the year ahead.

1. We acknowledge both victories and failures of the past, but we do not dwell on them nor linger at them but move onward from them into future avenues of service and ministry.

**L. 3:14 “I press”**

1. Strong’s #1377 *diōkō* to make to run or flee, put to flight, drive away, to run swiftly in order to catch a person or thing, to run after, to press on: figuratively of one who in a race runs swiftly to reach the goal, to pursue (in a hostile manner), in any way whatever to harass, trouble, molest one, to persecute, to seek after eagerly, earnestly endeavour to acquire.

2. This is the same word as “follow after” in 3:12.

3. Earnest and dedicated effort involved to make forward spiritual progress. It is never easy to make this kind of progress with the world, the flesh and the devil providing obstacles and friction. You can’t “press forward” if you are backsliding.

4. Consider a man running very fast. How he leans forward, as though he would send his heart before him, and go quicker than his legs can carry him! So did Paul “press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

5. We press forward toward this goal because:

a. We are not there yet but we would very much like to be.

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b. We don't like where we are, and we are not satisfied with our present condition and we wish to improve upon it.

c. We must "press" for spiritual maturity does not come automatically but only with much toil and effort.

d. It gives a goal and a purpose in our Christian life. As the old saying goes "If you aim at nothing, you will hit it".

6. "When they asked Napoleon why he continually made wars, he said, "I am the child of war. Conquest has made me what I am and conquest must maintain me." The Christian Church is the child of spiritual war. She only lives as she fights and rides forth conquering and to conquer. God deliver us from the self-congratulatory spirit, however it may come, and make us long and pine after something better! (Charles Spurgeon, "Onward!" *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 19, sermon 1114)."

### **M. 3:14 "mark"**

1. Strong's #4649 skopos; an observer, a watchman, the distant mark looked at, the goal or end one has in view.

2. Used only here in the New Testament.

3. The Christian life has a goal- Christlikeness (Romans 8:29). This is what we are pressing onward for. This is our "mark".

4. The idea is a sharpshooter with a rifle looking at a far-off target through his high-powered scope. He scopes the target and aims at it in the hopes to hit it.

### **N. 3:14 "prize"**

1. Strong's #1017 brabeion; the award to the victor in the games, a prize.

2. The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles have this as "reward".

3. The prize is Christ. Our goal is not a thing, like money or fame, but a person- that we may win Christ. Again, going back to the picture of the Greek athlete, what was his reward? He would be summoned from the floor of the stadium to the judge's seat to receive the prize. This prize was a wreath of leaves. Yet how that athlete will strain, struggle and sacrifice to receive such a transitory prize that will fade away in a matter of days! And how much greater is our reward, which is eternal! How can we let an athlete overshadow us in these matters!

### **O. 3:14 "high calling"**

1. "I have long felt that this means "the upward calling", and that it refers to the time of our Lord's return, to call His church up to Himself, as prophesied in 1 Thessalonians 4:17. It would appear that it is at this dramatic occasion that the judgment seat of CHRIST – the examination of believers' records - is to be set up, in accordance with I Corinthians 3:12-15, when "reward", and "loss", shall be assessed. I have quite recently discovered that my view of this is not new, as I impudently imagined, but that actually it was held by no less a person than Chrysostom, all those centuries ago, who remarked that "athletes are not crowned in the race course below; the king calls them up and there crowns them". At the close of our English football Cup Final, the players of the winning team are called up to receive the Cup, and both teams the medals, from the hands of the Queen, or other High Personage, who has been watching the match from a box above the tiers of seats below. So was it at the Athenian Games, that the Philippians would know so well, that the successful competitors were called up to receive their amaranthian crown from their Ruler's hands. So, we believe, will it be at the time when our Lord returns. Those who have gained the prize will have "the upward calling", to receive from His hands the token of His grace and pleasure, and to hear, His wondrous commendation, "Well done" - perhaps, also, the delighted plaudits of the assembled

saints. The Parousia will be our prize-giving! Oh, happy day-if we have "**so run**" (Guy King, *Joy Way*)."

2. The ESV has "upward call" for "high calling" which is not the same thing at all and is an inferior rendering. The Authorized Version reads as the traditional text manuscripts.

3. The highest call for a Christian man is to be conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29). This is the noblest work of them all in this life and no call is higher. This was the goal of Paul's Christian race. He got a quick start out of the gate in Acts 9:20, where "straightway he preached Christ". And as the runner he pressed forward, ignoring the distractions and the other runners, as he stretched himself to break that ribbon at the finish line.

4. "(Paul) stands among us. He does not lecture us, "ex cathedra," standing like a learned master far above his disciples, but he puts himself on our level. And though not a whit behind the very chief of the Apostles, he says, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended." He does not give us the details of his own imperfections and deficiencies, but in one word he confesses them in the gross. And then he declares that he burns with eager desire for perfection, so that it is the one passion of his soul to press onward towards the great goal of his hopes, the prize of his high calling in Christ Jesus. We cannot desire to have a better instructor than a man who sympathizes with us because he humbly considers himself to be of the same rank as ourselves. Teaching us to run, the Apostle, himself, runs (Charles Spurgeon, "Onward" in *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 19, sermon 1114)."

**N. 3:16 "attained"**

1. Strong's #5348 phthanô; to come before, precede, anticipate, arrive at, to reach, attain to.

2. This is a different word than was used in 3:12.

**O. 3:16 "walk"**

1. Strong's #4748 stoicheô; to proceed in a row as the march of a soldier, go in order, to walk, to direct one's life, to live

**3:17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.**

**3:18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:**

**3:19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)**

**3:20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:**

**XIX. Be Followers of Me 3:17-20**

**A. 3:17 "together"**

1. Strong's #4831 summimêtês; from sun (Strong's #4862) with; and mimeomai (Strong's #3401) to imitate; an imitator of others.

a. Used only here in the New Testament.

2. Some modern versions, like the ESV, use "imitate" here but that is an inferior rendering. Imitations tend to be cheap knock-offs and are inferior to the original pattern. That idea goes contrary to Paul's admonition here. We are not to be "cheap imitators" of Paul but fellow-followers with him as he (and we) follow Christ.

3. "Be ye followers of me" are hard words to say. Now stop and think about it- would you really want people to live as you do? What kind of church would your church be if it was

stocked with members who were exactly like you? Paul can say this because he was confident that he was going in the right direction and that he would be a safe guide for other Christians in their pilgrimage. But not Paul only, but others who walked (lived) in similar fashion. But for 99.99% of modern preachers to say to their congregations “follow me as I follow Christ” would probably be presumption. Paul could say it in all sincerity since he was an apostle but if someone else tried to say that to me today, I would probably think him to be arrogant and a false teacher. And I doubt if I would ever be spiritual enough to say this to any of my congregation.

**B. 3:17 “mark them”**

1. “Scope them out”, “put a tag on them to identify them by name.”

**C. 3:17 “ensample”**

1. Strong’s #5179 tupos; the mark of a stroke or blow, print, an example, an impression left by a stroke.
2. Probably the other apostles and those in Paul’s company. Preachers ought and must be examples to their congregations, but we dare not allow ourselves to lapse into some power-trip or ego-building exercise as a result of it. Far too many pastors demand a level of obedience to their example by their people that would be cultish.

**D. 3:18 “many walk”**

1. Not a “few” unfortunately. It seems that even in the church, more people are wrong than right.
2. The imperfect tense of the Greek showed that Paul was still giving this warning.

**E. 3:18 “weeping”**

1. Paul wept as he was forced to warn about the false teachers that infested the church in his day. He did it for two reasons:
  - a. For the souls of the false teachers, how they had condemned themselves to the wrath of God for their choice to follow and promote false doctrine.
  - b. For their victims, who will be led astray by their teachings.

**F. 3:18 “cross of Christ”**

1. Not the physical cross in this context, but the doctrine of the cross, namely, the doctrine of the substitutionary atonement of Christ. It is also the attitude of the cross, where God reveals His displeasure with the world and the fallen sinful nature of man.
2. Paul does not really come out in this passage and describe who these “enemies” are or what they did to earn such a condemnation from Paul. But comparing with other passages, we can identify a man who is an enemy of the cross of Christ as a man who:
  - a. Preaches another gospel
  - b. Preaches another plan of salvation
  - c. Teaches adherence to the Law for salvation or justification
  - d. Do not live a life worthy of the cross
  - e. Questions or downplays the cross
3. The cross demands a life of holiness and purity. To live after the flesh is to continually re-crucify Christ and trample His blood under foot. If they really loved Christ, they would not despise His atonement for their sin which they still willingly commit.

**G. 3:19 Characteristics of these false teachers**

1. Their end is destruction
  - a. The destiny of all false teachers.
  - b. The pre-King James translations all use “damnation” where the King James and the ESV use “destruction”. We do not have the notes from the King James translators as to why they decided to soften the word here.
2. Their God is their belly

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a. Here is their god! Sensuality in food, drink, sex then as now mastered these men. These men posed as Christians and gloried in this, their shame. They serve themselves and their own fleshly and carnal appetites. Their flesh in their god. They teach false doctrines because it pays well and puts food in their belly. If apostasy and error were not so profitable, fewer men would be involved in it. Look at all the English Bible Versions we have been plagued with since 1881. If they didn't sell so well and weren't so profitable (they are all copywritten after all), then we wouldn't see so many versions that attempt to replace the King James Bible. So how do you spot a false teacher? He (or she!) is the only who is always harping on money and material things! He is always talking about tithing, seed faith, faith promise, mortgage burning, getting out of credit card debt, asking God to give you a raise and a bigger house, etc. They put all the emphasis on the here and now instead of on spiritual, eternal things. These are Epicurians, who worship the belly and serve the flesh.

b. It is interesting that Paul called the spiritually-slow Creations "slow bellies" in Titus 1:12.

i. Apostasy will either make you make an idol of your belly or will make you a spiritual slug, unwilling to do anything at all in a spiritual manner.

c. God has promised to destroy such a belly in 1 Corinthians 6:13.

d. "F. B. Meyer told the story of a man of wealth who was taking his friend round his magnificent mansion, in which a spacious chamber was dedicated to be a chapel. The visitor, who thought of little else than good living, on entering the chapel, said, "What a magnificent kitchen this would make." Whereupon his host replied, "You are mistaken, this is not a kitchen; when I have made my belly my god, then I will make my chapel my kitchen, but not before." Applying the story to "many" whose one thought is food and drink, Dr. Meyer's comment was, "There is no chapel in their life, it is all kitchen." (Guy King, *Joy Way*).

3. Their glory is in their shamelessness

a. They really have no glory except to glory in their sin and the fact that they wallow in error and damn their followers to condemnation. They certainly cannot glory in Christ, so what is left for them to brag about? False teachers usually claim to have some special and hidden insights to truth that orthodox believers do not have and they make much of and glory in these things, which are, in reality, just spiritual figments of their overactive imaginations. Their glory is a shameful thing because it is tied up in shameful things.

4. They mind earthly things

a. The carnal, fleshly man (and professor) is more apt to be led away by false teacher.

b. A spiritual man, with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the glory of God in mind (instead of feeding his belly) will not be so easily swayed.

5. These may have been Epicureans, who followed and served the lusts of the flesh, who believed that pleasure was the highest good.

### H. 3:20 "conversation"

1. Strong's #4175 politeuma; the administration of civil affairs or of a commonwealth, the constitution of a commonwealth, form of government and the laws by which it is administered.

2. Used only here in the New Testament.

3. In this context, our "conversation" refers to the laws by which we live and conduct ourselves. It has the idea of the laws that a citizen of a country obeys. These laws are

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heavenly for the Christian, not earthly. We do not look to earthly philosophies or standards of conduct to order and govern our lives, but rather look to the Scripture and to heaven for those laws and examples. Paul was proud of his Roman citizenship as were the Philippians. But Christians are citizens of a kingdom that is not of this world (John 18:36).

4. Our walk, our life, are in heaven, not on earth. We merely exist here. We shall fully live up there. Although we are stuck on earth, we walk in heaven. Paul tells us in Ephesians that we are seated in heavenly places with Christ, so our conversation is there too. But the unsaved have no heavenly citizenship, no heavenly city. Their country will burn one day and is heading for ultimate destruction. Thus, there are two countries in creation, a heavenly one and an earthly one, and one's eternal destiny is dependent on where your citizenship lies.

5. "Again, let us remember that as aliens *we have privileges as well as duties*. The princes of evil cannot draft us into their regiments; we cannot be compelled to do Satan's work. The king of this world may make his vassals serve him, but he cannot raise a conscription upon aliens. He may order out his troops to this villainy, or to that dastard service, but the child of God claims an immunity from all the commands of Satan; let evil maxims bind the men that own their sway, we are free, and own not the prince of the power of the air... "Do not expect me to fall in with your ways and customs; I am in Rome, but I shall not do as Rome does. I will let you see that I am an alien, and that I have rights as an alien, even here in this foreign land. I am not to be bound to fight your battles, nor march at the sound of your drums." Brethren, we are soldiers of Christ; we are enlisted in *his* army; and as aliens here, we are not to be constrained into the army of evil. Let lords and lands have what masters they will, let us be free, for Christ is our Master still. The seventy thousand whom God has reserved, will not bow the knee to Baal. Be it known unto thee, O world, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the image which thou hast set up. Servants of God we are, and we will not be in bondage unto men. As we are free from the conscription of the State, we must remember, also, that we are not eligible to its honors. I know you will say that is not a privilege; but it is a great boon if looked at aright. An Englishman in New York is not eligible for the very prickly throne of the President; I suppose he could not well be made a governor of Massachusetts or any other State, and, indeed, he may be well content to renounce the difficulties and the honor too. So also, the Christian man here is not eligible to this world's honors. It is a very ill omen to hear the world clap its hands and say "Well done" to the Christian man. He may begin to look to his standing and wonder whether he has not been doing wrong when the unrighteous give him their approbation. "What, did I do wrong," said Socrates, "that yonder villain praised me just now?" And so may the Christian say, "What, have I done wrong, that So-and-so spoke well of me, for if I had done right he would not; he has not the sense to praise goodness, he could only have applauded that which suited his own taste. Christian men, ye must never covet the world's esteem; the love of this world is not in keeping with the love of God. "If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him." Treat its smiles as you treat its threats, with quiet contempt...O harlot world, it were a sad dishonor to be thy favorite. Tire thy head and paint thy face, thou Jezebel, but thou art no friend of ours, nor will we desire thy hollow love. The men of this world were mad to raise us to their seats of honor, for we are aliens and citizens of another country. When the Pope sent a noted Protestant statesman a present of some silver goblets, he returned them with this answer- "The citizens of Zurich compel their judges to swear twice in the year that they will receive no presents from foreign princes, therefore take them back." More than twice

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in the year should the Christian resolve that he will not accept the smiles of this world and will do no homage to its glory. "We fear the Greeks even when they bear gifts." Like the Trojans of old, we may be beguiled with presents even if unconquered in arms. Forswear then the grandeur and honor of this fleeting age. Say in life, what a proud cardinal said in death, "Vain pomp and glory of the world, I hate ye." Pass through Vanity-Fair without trading in its vanities; crying, in answer to their "What will ye buy?" — "We buy the truth." Take up the pilgrim's song and sing it always (Charles Spurgeon, "Citizenship in Heaven, sermon 476, *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* 8:742-743)."

### **I. 3:20 "the Savior"**

1. The ESV uses "a Savior" instead of "the Savior". The Tyndale does the same thing. No! The Authorized Version reading is better. We are not looking for any old "savior" for there are many such pretenders today. We are looking for THE Savior, our One and Only Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, and no other!

### **J. 3:20 "from whence we look for the Savior"**

1. Not only is our conversation in heaven, but our hope is too. One day, Christ will return from heaven, gather His church in the rapture, take us to heaven, give us our glorified body and our millennial inheritance. That's our hope and nothing on earth or that is earthly can provide anything like it!

2. We look for our Savior from heaven, not from earth. We have no earthly redeemer, no earthly salvation, no earthly Savior! Our salvation and our deliverance will not come from this fallen, corrupt world, but from heaven. It is the ultimate in folly for a Christian to be looking towards his church, denomination, government or political party for salvation! How foolish are so many American Christians to think that their salvation will come from conservative politics or the Republican Party (or any other political party)! They are guilty of idolatry against Christ and the government of Heaven if they look toward a foreign (earthly) government to provide for them what they should be petitioning the government of God for.

## **XX. The Glorified Body 3:21**

### **A. 3:21 "change"**

1. Strong's #3345 *metaschêmatizô*; from *meta* (Strong's #3326) with; and *schema* (Strong's #4976) fashion; to change the figure of, to transform

### **B. 3:21 "vile"**

1. Strong's #5014 *tapeinôsis*; lowness, low estate

2. Our earthly body is vile. Amen? It is full of sin and it fights us every day as we try to live for Christ. It is full of pain, disease, corruption and death.

3. Christ made no provision for redeeming this body of flesh, which is why He will give us a new body. Don't reform it- replace it! Instead of redeeming our "vile" bodies, He is simply going to give us a new one at the resurrection with our new glorified bodies.

4. Our physical body is a creation of God and thus was initially "good" but sin has corrupted it beyond hope with the fall of Adam.

5. We can expect the modern/critical Bible versions to attack the idea of our physical bodies being "vile", and they attack the wording:

- Living Bible- "dying bodies"
- Today's English Version- "weak, mortal"
- Amplified, RV, ASV- "the body of our humiliation"
- Philips- "wretched"
- New English Bible- "our humble state"
- RSV, NAB, ESV- "lowly"



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g. Most commentaries too

But the Authorized Version is correct. All the pre-Authorized Version translations also use "vile".

6. Your old body is vile. If you doubt that, see it a week after it has died!

7. Philippians 3 is the chapter of vile things, such as the "dung" in 3:8 and the "vile body" of 3:21.

8. Why is our natural body "vile"?

a. It is a body of sin.

b. It is a body of weakness.

c. It is a body of corruption.

d. It is a body that can be used to commit horrible sins. Our bodies are the vehicles to commit the sins that our hearts create.

### **C. 3:21 "his glorified body"**

1. Our new body will be fashioned after the glorified body of Christ. This is what we anticipate and hope for.

a. We receive our new body after the rapture, see 1 Corinthians 15:51-54 and 1 John 3:2.

2. What will it be like? We glean the following from our observations of Christ's resurrection body (See Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 21 and all through Revelation):

a. Sinless

b. Powerful. The full extent of its powers and abilities are probably not revealed in Scripture

c. Deathless. It cannot die.

d. Free from sickness or any physical deformity

e. Able to travel anywhere in the blink of an eye- teleportation

f. It can eat and drink but does not need any rest

g. It is glorious

h. It can levitate

i. It can go through solid objects

j. It will have flesh and bone but no blood. The life of the flesh is in the blood, but a glorified body has no such need of blood to sustain its life

k. It will have an infinitely powerful mind. Right now, we only use a fraction of our brains and mental capacity, but in our glorified body, we will use the full 100% (and more!) of our intellectual powers.

3. When we receive our glorified body, then our salvation will be complete.

### **D. 3:21 "subdue"**

1. Strong's #5293 *hupotassô*; from *hupo* (Strong's #5259) of, by, under; and *tassô* (Strong's #5021) appoint, ordain; to arrange under, to subordinate, to yield to one's admonition or advice, to obey, be subject.

2. A Greek military term meaning "to arrange [troop divisions] in a military fashion under the command of a leader".

3. In non-military use, it was "a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden".

Pilgrim Way Commentary on Philippians

**Philippians Chapter 4**

**4:1** Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

**4:2** I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

**4:3** And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.

**XXI. Exhortation to Euodias and Syntyche 4:1-3**

**A. 4:1 “dearly beloved”**

1. Not just beloved but more than that, emphasized and intensive.

**B. 4:1 “longed for”**

1. Strong’s #1973 epiphetos; from epi (Strong’s #1909) an intensive; and epipothêō (Strong’s #1971) greatly desire, long for; longed for.
2. A very strong term, used only here in the New Testament.

**C. 4:1 “crown”**

1. Strong’s #4735 stephanos; a crown, the wreath or garland which was given as a prize to victors in public games
2. Paul was instrumental in starting this church and probably led many of these people to the Lord.

**D. 4:1 “Stand fast”**

1. This is an exhortation that applies to all believers in all ages.
2. The Philippian believers lived in a heathen city, a Roman colony, with all of the usual worldly sins and temptations. None of us live in a Christian or a godly city as there are no such cities (have there ever been any? Calvin’s Geneva certainly does not qualify as you could have been put to death for holding certain theological positions. Colonial Massachusetts does not qualify either as they exiled Roger Williams and whipped Baptists).
3. Stand fast in:
  - a. Service
  - b. Belief
  - c. Christian testimony
4. How to stand fast?
  - a. Maintain constant communion with the Lord at all times.
  - b. Keep one’s thoughts on the Lord and on spiritual things.
  - c. Be filled with the Spirit.
  - d. Much Bible reading, meditation and devotional activity.
  - e. Keep busy for the Lord in His service.

**E. 4:1 “dearly beloved” (second usage)**

1. Repeated for emphasis. This stresses the very deep affection that Paul had for the Philippians. He refers to them as:
  - a. My dearly beloved brethren
  - b. Those he dearly longed for
  - c. His joy
  - d. His crown
  - e. His dearly beloved

**F. 4:2 “beseech”**

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1. Strong's # 3870 parakaleô; from para (Strong's #3844) along side of; and kaleô (Strong's #2564) call; to call to one's side, call for, summon, to address, speak to, (call to, call upon), which may be done in the way of exhortation, entreaty, comfort, instruction, etc., to admonish, exhort, to beg, entreat, beseech, to encourage, strengthen

G. There is no reason to assume that Euodias and Syntyche are "deaconesses", as some commentators do.

H. There was obviously some potential problem brewing in this church and these two women were at the center of it. It has been suggested that Paul is writing this letter to exhort these women to put their differences behind them, adopt the mind of Christ and be humble.

1. What their problem is we are not told, but it must not have been overly important, else Paul would have dealt with it by name. But if it is a minor issue or a personality problem, we ought to seek a compromise or simply drop the matter.

2. Many church splits and fights start over something minor and stupid. Rarely do churches split over "good" reasons, such as a doctrinal apostasy. In those cases, we do not need to swallow our differences.

3. Paul wasn't about to take sides because the problem was not important enough. Just solve the thing, bury the hatchet and let's move on!

4. This is why Paul in this letter makes several appeals to unity- 1:27, 2:2 and 3:14,15.

5. Contention in the church is always caused by pride (Proverbs 13:10). There is an issue and it might not even be all that important. But self and ego must be served, and the issue must be pushed to our satisfaction, even if it means splitting the church. We have to be right at all costs.

6. The Lord also hates those that sow discord among the brethren (Proverbs 6:19), and that includes those who spark dissention within the assembly.

7. These two women must have been shocked and probably publicly humiliated to hear their names called out by Paul in this letter! Who snitched on them to Paul? Was it Epaphroditus?

### **I. 4:3 "yokefellow"**

1. Strong's #4805 suzugos; yoked together, of those united by the bond of marriage, relationship, office, labor, study, business, or the like, as two oxen pulling together in the same harness. Used only here in the New Testament

2. Who is the yokefellow? The pastor of the Philippian church? If so, does Philippians have a dual audience- the church and the pastor? If so, the pastor is not named, but he is to help these women resolve their differences.

A, Could this be Epaphroditus?

3. This is one of the petty jobs that pastors are often stuck with- "baby-sitting" carnal Christians, which takes time away from study and ministry of the Word.

4. Euodias and Syntyche are spoken of by Paul to have worked with him and helped him in the past, but now something had come between them, threatening their fellowship and usefulness. So this unnamed yokefellow, and Clement, are to all work together to restore peace and harmony to the church.

5. Lydia was the first worker in this church (Acts 16) and every good church will have several working women in it. These women do not need to be "deaconesses" in order to do that kind of work, especially since women cannot be deacons. I may do the work of a pastor or an evangelist without filling either office.

6. Paul uses the term "yokefellow" with the imagery of two oxen pulling together in the same yoke. They get nothing accomplished if they are not of the same mind.

### **J. 4:3 "Clement"**

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1. There is no reason to assume this is the same “Clement” who wrote the epistles of Clement or who served as the “bishop of Rome” as some commentators try to assume.
2. This name was common enough in Paul’s day.

### **K. 4:3 “other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life”**

1. Those who are born again. Every saint has his name in the book of life. Every name in human history is included in this book, only to be blotted out when the sinner dies without Christ or commits a sin unto death.
2. References to the Book of Life:
  - a. Exodus 32:32,33 Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.
    1. Names are not added to the Book for the names of all the living from all time start out in the Book. They are removed upon death if unsaved, or even during life if certain sins are committed.
  - b. Psalms 69:28 Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.
  - c. Daniel 12:1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.
  - d. Philippians 4:3 And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.
  - e. Revelation 3:5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.
    1. Names can be blotted out of the Book based on whether they were saved or not. It appears that the names of everyone born are in the Book, only to be removed at death (or before) if that person either dies lost or commits some final sin of rejection of Christ before they die. Also see Revelation 22:19,
  - f. Revelation 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.
  - g. Revelation 17:8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they beheld the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.
  - h. Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.
    - a. The Book of Life will be referenced at the Great White Throne judgment.
  - i. Revelation 20:15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

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j. Revelation 21:27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

k. Revelation 22:19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

### **4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.**

#### **XXII. Rejoice in the Lord 4:4**

A. Repeated from 3:1. Remember, Paul writes these words while languishing in a Roman jail. He also writes them to a local church with two of its members threatening a division! Trials and tribulations cannot knock the shout out of the mature Christian. In spite of all problems and issues, Paul urges rejoicing at all times. Well, just go ahead and rejoice anyway! Forget the trials and tribulations and problems you currently face. Go ahead and slap the devil in the face and rejoice anyway! And we are to rejoice "always", regardless of circumstances. Only a Christian, filled with the Spirit, could ever hope to rejoice, even in the face of unparalleled disaster, yet he does it. Paul was not urging the Philippians to be unrealistic. He was not saying that we should never feel sad as even Jesus wept (John 11:35). Paul is stressing that we should focus on the blessings we have in Christ and being grateful for these regardless of how we may feel at any particular time.

1. You notice that the object of our joy is "in the Lord". We are to be rejoicing in Him, His person, His works, His grace, His love and His goodness. We are not to be rejoicing in things of the world or in carnal things for they do not bring joy. Whatever benefit carnal things bring are temporary and vain. It will soon wear off and provides no spiritual good or benefit.

2. Sometimes you cannot rejoice in anything else, but you can rejoice in the Lord; then, rejoice in him to the full. Do not rejoice in your temporal prosperity, for riches take to themselves wings, and fly away. Do not rejoice even in your great successes in the work of God. Remember how the seventy disciples came back to Jesus, and said, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name," and he answered, "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." If the Lord be your joy, your joy will never dry up. All other things are but for a season; but God is for ever.

B. "It often happens that men can stand the great sorrows and the great trials of life but are undone by what are almost minor inconveniences. But this Christian joy enables a man to accept even them with a smile. John Nelson was one of Wesley's most famous early preachers. He and Wesley carried out a mission in Cornwall, near Land's End, and Nelson tells about it. "All that time, Mr. Wesley and I lay on the floor: he had my greatcoat for a pillow, and I had Burkitt's notes on the New Testament for mine. After being here near three weeks, one morning about three o'clock Mr. Wesley turned over, and, finding me awake, clapped me on the side, saying: `Brother Nelson, let us be of good cheer: I have one whole side yet, for the skin is off but on one side!'" They had little enough even to eat. One morning Wesley had preached with great effect: "As we returned, Mr. Wesley stopped his horse to pick the blackberries, saying: `Brother Nelson, we ought to be thankful that there are plenty blackberries; for this is the best country I ever saw for getting a stomach, but the worst I ever saw for getting food!'" Christian joy made Wesley able to accept the great blows of life, and also to greet the lesser discomforts with a jest. If the Christian really walks with Christ, he walks with joy (William Barclay, "Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians" in the *Daily Study Bible*)."

C. A sour-faced, pickle-pussed Christianity is a sin. What do Christians have to be grouchy about? We have eternal life, a mansion in heaven the Bible (with its approximately 13,000 promises), the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and so on. To lose the joy of one's salvation is a terrible thing and it is the symptom of a defeated, backslidden state.

#### **4:5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.**

##### **XXIII. Let Your Moderation be Known 4:5**

A. The translations use a variety of readings for "moderation".

1. The Tyndale and Coverdale use "softness".
2. The Geneva and Bishops have "patient mind".
3. The ESV has "reasonableness".

B. Let your Christian testimony, lifestyle, maturity, Spirit-filled life show at all times. After all, the Christian is never "off duty" nor does he ever take a day off. Our lives and testimonies are to be a continual witness to those who observe it. Moderation is putting a check on your own will and disciplining your own lusts and desires, where we do not assert our own rights.

C. "**The Lord is at hand**" is a reference to the hope of the soon return of Christ. Paul was a premillennialist after all who looked for the imminent and any-moment return of Christ. With that hope, the Christian should always be diligent that he is maintaining a good testimony. How embarrassing it would be if Christ came back and found a Christian sleeping (in his testimony) or engaged in some sin instead of living a Spirit-filled life! Hence this exhortation to be always ready, because we never know when Christ will return in the rapture and when we will have to stand at the bema seat to give account of our Christian life and stewardship.

1. The phrase is similar to "Maranatha" ("Our Lord cometh") of 1 Corinthians 16:22.

#### **4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.**

##### **24. An Exhortation to Prayer 4:6**

A. "**Be careful for nothing**" or be anxious about nothing, or don't worry about anything. The Christian is not permitted to fret, worry or stew about circumstances or people as sinners do. After all, we have recourse to an omnipotent God who has promised to meet our needs. Hence the exhortation to prayer. To worry is a sin because it calls into doubt the promises, care, love and faithfulness of God. God's cure for care is constant prayer. We are to talk everything and anything over with the Lord in prayer. If it concerns us, it concerns Him.

1. We can be concerned about things we need in life but we are not to worry or fret about them.

B. Prayer is the larger word here, supplication is narrower.

1. "Prayer" involves all of these acts of worship, from the actual act of prayer to meditation to public worship.
2. "Supplication" is the "asking" and "petition" part of prayer.

C. The sin of an unthankful and ungrateful attitude, where we never acknowledge or thank God for His infinite blessings and goodness to us.

D. "**everything**" means exactly what it says. Nothing is too small or unimportant not to bring to prayer.

E. "**requests**" Not demands. We cannot demand anything from God. To hear Charismatics pray and "demand" things from God through some assumed spiritual authority they claim to possess is the height of arrogance and blasphemy. To demand things from God reveals an improper attitude that we are somehow above God or that God owes us answers to prayer.

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God answers prayer for His sake (not ours) and those actions are based on His mercy and love, not on some sort of obligation that He supposedly owes us. Mortal man will not order God around like He was some sort of glorified bellhop.

1. We are to let our requests be made known unto God by prayer and supplication. What is the difference between prayer and supplication? Prayer is the general act while supplication is the specific request.

2. This is one (but not the only one) reason for prayer- to make our requests known unto God. Hopefully, it is not the only reason we pray! If we only pray when we want to get something out of God, what a poor relationship we have with our heavenly Father! Prayer is also communion, fellowship and just being in His presence to cultivate intimacy.

3. These requests are to be made known to God and God alone. We are to pray to no one else nor are we to rely upon any other agency for such provisions. We will not pray to Allah, the Buddha, any Romanist saint, anyone. To do so would be the height of blasphemy.

F. This encouragement would have been very fitting for the Philippians as they obviously needed it.

1. They were suffering persecution- Philippians 1:18,19

2. They were facing disturbances in the church- Philippians 1:27; 4:2.

3. They had some carnal members who were causing disturbances in the church- Philippians 2:3,4; 3:12.

4. They were dealing with false teachers- Philippians 3:2,3,18,19.

5. Some of the members were struggling regarding the necessities of life, like obtaining food, clothing, shelter. Philippians 4:19.

G. The remedy for fear, worry and anxiety is prayer.

H. "If a man thinks of something often enough and long enough, he will come to a stage when he cannot stop thinking about it. His thoughts will be quite literally in a groove out of which he cannot jerk them (William Barclay, "Philippians, Colossians and Philippians" in *The Daily Study Bible*, page 97)."

1. This works for good and bad. In a bad context, if a man constant thinks about pornography, it will ultimately consume his thinking.

2. A man cannot know peace when he is thinking on negative or carnal things.

**4:7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**

### **XXV. The Peace of God 4:7**

A. "Peace" comes from God and is of God, not the vastly inferior "peace" that the world gives which is carnal, temporary and unsatisfying. True peace comes from God, not from man or any of his organizations, like the United Nations. Man, left to himself, will never have peace as his heart is evil and there will be no "peace on Earth" until the Prince of Peace is ruling from Jerusalem. "But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt (Isaiah 57:20)." But in the midst of a world in turmoil, there can be peace in the heart of the Christian.

1. God is called the "God of Peace" in Romans 15:33.

a. The God of Peace will bruise Satan under your feet shortly in Romans 16:20.

b. The God of Peace shall sanctify us wholly in 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

c. The God of Peace was involved in the resurrection of Jesus in Hebrews 13:20.



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B. This peace of God is beyond all understanding. It cannot be analyzed or adequately explained, either in its content or its operations in the heart. The peace of God is one of those things that is "better felt than telt." If Paul could not understand it, how can we?

C. The peace of God will keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. "Keep" is a military term. The Greek word has the idea of "to guard, to protect by a military guard, either to prevent hostile invasion, or to keep the inhabitants of a besieged city from flight." This peace protects us from need, worry and fear that sinners suffer from, since we have an omnipotent heavenly Father to provide everything we need.

1. The Philippians would be familiar with this military language since they were used to seeing Roman guards at their military posts. Philippi was an army town.

D. "He who tries with a philosophic look to discover the secret of the Christian's peace finds himself in a maze. I know not how it is or why. I see these men hunted through the earth. I turn the pages of history and I find them hunted to their graves. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, afflicted and tormented, yet I also see upon the Christian's brow a calm serenity. I cannot understand this. I know that I myself, even in my merriest moments, am disturbed, that when my enjoyments run the highest, still there are waves of doubt and fear across my mind....Understanding can never get to that peace which the Christian hath attained. The philosopher may teach us such; he can never give us rules whereby to reach the peace that Christians have in their conscience." (Charles Spurgeon, "How To Keep The Heart", *New Park Street Pulpit*, 4:123, sermons 180-181)

E. This verse is the closest that Scripture gets to any idea of "Quietism" as the Quakers may present it.

F. "The peace of God"

1. It passes all understanding- Philippians 4:7
2. It keeps the hearts and minds- Philippians 4:7
3. We are to let it rule in our hearts- Colossians 3:15

**4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.**

**4:9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you**

### **XXVI. Think on These Things 4:8,9**

A. Now Paul tells us what to think! People whine about this, saying that it is Nazi-like to try to control people's thinking, but if you stop and think about it, someone or something is always controlling your thinking. Advertisements continually influence you, as does everything you see and hear on the news.

1. Satan and the spirit of this age continually control the thinking of sinners as well as many saints. So why so much opposition to allowing Christ to control our thinking and bring every thought into captivity of Christ?
2. This is Paul's version of the "power of positive thinking" made famous by Norman Vincent Peale, but we notice that it only works for the Christian, for no unsaved person can think these thoughts with his carnal nature controlling him.

B. What we are to think upon:

1. **Things that are true.** Error always flaunts about "hidden secrets" that can only be understood by secret rites or memberships. But truth is open and free to all, for those who have ears to hear and a heart to understand. But we can't always simply dwell

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upon things that are true. Preachers especially must waste hours in studying error so that they may warn their people about it and better appreciate the truth. And what sort of things are “true”? Things we find in the Bible, for “thy word is truth!” (John 17:17). Thus, our thoughts should always be centered around the Word of God.

2. **Things that are honest.** Truth is like this- grave, sober, honorable, while error is the opposite. Truth is open and above-board, for all to see, and we should be as well, in our doings and in our ministries. Beware of a man who always wants to do things in private!

3. **Things that are just**, that pertain to righteousness. These are the judgments and the laws of God. We are also to be just, honest, and open in all of our dealings, both secular and sacred.

4. **Things that are pure.** Or chaste, in words and deeds, in opposition to all filthiness and foolish talking, to obscene words and actions. These are truths that pertain to the holiness of God and they should be our constant meditation.

5. **Things that are lovely.** To think on lovely things, honorable things and things full of culture is to think the thoughts of God. There is little in this world that is lovely or beautiful to contemplate.

6. **Things that are of good report.** When we hear others speak of good things (things that pertain to God) then we should consider them, like people being saved or sin being stilled or the kingdom progressing.

C. We are to think and meditate on these things rather than thinking on worldly things. How many people dwell upon sports or television and movies, money or other worthless things instead of meditating on divine topics?

D. We can set our mind on these things if we bring every thought into captivity” to Christ in 2 Corinthians 10:5.

E. We have to think on carnal things in the common duties of life but we are to meditate upon and we are to set our affections on these things listed in this verse.

F. We are to exclude negative thinking and make a conscious decision to focus on the positive and the spiritual in our thinking.

**4:10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.**

**4:11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.**

**4:12 I know both how to be abased and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.**

**4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.**

### **XXVII. The State of Contentment 4:10-13**

A. 4:10 The Philippian church wanted to do as much as they could for Paul, but monetary and geographical constraints probably limited what they could do.

**B. 4:11 “Because of want”** or “because I am trying to get something out of you...”

C. 4:11 “The words ‘have learned’ are in a construction in the Greek which speaks of entrance into a new condition. It is ‘I have come to learn.’ Paul had not always known that. He had been reared in the lap of luxury and had never known want as a young man (Kenneth Wuest, *Philippians in the Greek New Testament*).”

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1. Strong's #842 autarkes; from autos (Strong's #846) him, his; and arkeō (Strong's #714) be content; sufficient for one's self, strong enough or processing enough to need no aid or support, contented with one's lot, with one's means, though the slenderest. Used only here in the New Testament.

D. 4:11 **Contentment!** Be happy with what you have and do not be consumed with the desire to have more. The only thing you should be greedy of is to have more of Christ.

1. "The word 'content' is the translation of a Greek word used by the Stoic school of philosophy which taught that men should be sufficient to himself for all things. It means 'to be independent of external circumstances.' It speaks of self-sufficiency and competency. But Paul's self-sufficiency was not of the Stoic kind. It was Christ-sufficiency. Paul's independence was not Stoic independence, but dependence upon Christ. He found his sufficiency in Christ. He was independent of circumstances because he was dependent upon Christ (Kenneth Wuest, *Philippians in the Greek New Testament*)."

2. When Paul spoke of his needs, he did not do so to feather his nest, but that the givers (in this case, the Philippians) could get the blessing for fulfilling his need. Paul did not hesitate to make his needs known to his supporting churches, but he does not say "Give me for my sake" but rather "Give me for your sake, that you may get the blessing!" We bless ourselves when we give to God's work. Lack of contentment is a violation of the Tenth Commandment about coveting. You have what God wants you to have or as much as He can trust you with. To want more (especially money or fame) is to go beyond the will of God for you. If we have food and clothing, we are supposed to be content with that (1 Timothy 6:8). If we have our daily bread, what else do we really need? Oh, we want a lot of things, but what do we really need?

3. Content with what?

a. Money

b. Physical things. If you have food and raiment, be content (1 Timothy 6:8).

c. Glory and fame

d. In terms of ministry, the size of your ministry

i. It is human nature to always want a larger attendance or more meetings or a larger building, but learn to be content with the size, place and type of ministry God has placed you in.

ii. Too many preachers are never content, always looking for a bigger or "better" ministry than the one they currently have.

4. Contentment must be learned. Paul had to learn to be happy with and in the will of God. He had finally learned how to be content, but it was a long curriculum and the tuition was high.

a. This attitude is not natural for man as he is naturally greedy and selfish.

Anyone can learn to be full or rich, but what about being poor or hungry? But when you are saved, the love for God replaces the love for things and you begin to understand the will of God for your life and become content with those things that God allows you to have. But this is a difficult curriculum.

b. The horseleach hath two daughters, crying "Give, give" (Proverbs 30:15).

c. A. W. Tozer wrote that blessed is the man who has been delivered from the "tyranny of things".

E. 4:12 Notice the perfect tenses in the Greek in this verse, denoting a final, finished and complete action.

1. The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest (Isaiah 57:20) and that is a graphic picture of the unregenerate human heart.

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2. When you receive Christ as Savior and begin to separate yourself from the things of this world and from the lusts of the flesh, you will be gradually weaned from the lust for worldly things, fame, power, money, etc.

3. A right relationship with Christ and satisfaction in Him will bring a spiritual contentment with your state and your position within the will of God that nothing else can. Paul had to be instructed in that secret and he learned it, but most of us fail that class year after year.

F. 4:12 To learn how to accept humiliation, defeats, insults and being “slapped down” is not natural for us. It must be learned, and we must be taught and accept it.

G. 4:12 You wouldn’t think one would have to learn how to abound, as human nature loves success and promotion. But as a Christian, we must learn to accept promotion and success graciously and in a Christian spirit, lest it goes to our head and ruin us and lead us into pride and ego.

H. 4:12 **“instructed”** This word is used by the secret religious sects to describe the initiation into their arcane realms of knowledge. Modern freemasonry would be a good modern example. This is knowledge not imparted to the casual auditor or hearer but is reserved only for the serious student who wished to go deeper. Aristotle used to say how he had two sets of lessons, one of his casual students and another for the serious student. Christ spoke in parables to the masses, but he explained the parables only in private to his disciples. God will not teach all men how to be abased and how to abound, but He will impart that knowledge only to His favorite ones, ones willing to put that knowledge to good use and go deeper into such truths. No wonder so few Christians know anything of this!

I. 4:12 Paul knew both sides of this coin, about being in want and having more than he could spend.

J. 4:13 How to be content? How to be abased and abound? What school of man can teach such lessons? None. But we are able to do these things only through Christ. Christ strengthens us to adopt these unnatural attitudes and frames of mind so we can enact 4:12. God must change the heart of His children to embrace poverty and suffering if necessary, if it be His will for His glory.

1. You can do whatever you need to do for Christ and whatever God commands you to do one way and one way only- through Christ, Who alone can give you the strength to obey God in all things.

**4:14 Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.**

**4:15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.**

**4:16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.**

**4:17 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.**

**4:18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.**

**4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.**

### **XXVIII. The Generosity of the Philippians 4:14-19**

#### **A. 4:14 “affliction”**

1. The Philippians kept in touch with Paul, in both good times and bad. That’s the purpose behind modern missionary prayer letters, to keep the supporting churches up-

## Pilgrim Way Commentary on Philippians

to-date with the needs of the ministry and in keeping them informed about the good times and the bad.

### **B. 4:15 “communicated”**

1. Paul’s only communication at this time that he is referencing was with the Philippian church, which sent him a financial gift during a period of need by Paul.

C. 4:16 A congratulation from Paul to the Philippians for their support of him. They supported Paul constantly and consistently when they were able and Paul did not forget it.

1. This is an important example for missionaries and anyone who supports a preacher—thank those who support you and pray for God’s blessing upon them for their liberality.

### **D. 4:17 “desire”**

1. Strong’s #1934 epizeteô; from epi (Strong’s #1909) an intensifier; and zêteô (Strong’s #2212) to seek in order to find; to enquire for, seek for, search for, seek diligently, to wish for, crave, to demand, clamor for.

2. This is a strong word for “earnestly desire or crave”.

### **E. 4:17 “not that I desire a gift”**

1. Paul was again defending himself from the charge that he was preaching for money or that he was trying to make a living off of the Philippian church.

### **F. 4:17 “fruit abound to your account”**

1. Paul is careful not to leave the impression that the Philippian gift was superfluous or that he didn’t appreciate it. On the contrary, he really appreciated it. But these things must not be taken for granted. You must tell the givers that their gift was appreciated and needful. Never assume that they automatically understand that, because they may not.

2. Giving out of a right heart for an honest and sincere motive is a sacrifice unto God that is acceptable and well-pleasing. The gift is likened to an offering that is pleasing to God. Isn’t that what a gift is, just another form of sacrifice-offering? We are saying that I am making an offering of my money to God by giving it to this ministry or to this preacher.

3. “It would appear that GOD has at least four accounts

a. **“The riches of His goodness”**, Romans 2:4.

b. **The riches of His wisdom**, Romans 11:33.

c. **“The riches of His grace”**, Ephesians 1:7.

d. **The riches of His glory**, Ephesians 1:18. (Guy King, *Joy Way*.)”

### **G. 4:18 “I have all”**

1. “The late Professor Deissmann, to whom the world is indebted for his discovery, through his archaeological study of the unearthed papyri and ostraca of the Ancient East, that the New Testament is written, not in classical Greek, but in a vernacular, almost colloquial, form of Greek as used by the common people of the day, has an interesting suggestion concerning the phrase, “I have all”. He remarks that the word translated “have” was frequently used in a commercial sense and was employed for describing the giving of a receipt. If his idea be adopted, the phrase would read, “I give a receipt in full”. In any case, that is the significance of the verse, as it stand (Guy King, *Joy Way*).”

### **H. 4:18 “I am full”**

1. Perfect tense in the Greek, a finished and completed state that cannot be added to or improved. Paul was content and satisfied as much as a man could be, even while sitting in a Roman dungeon! Yet how few Christians could say this if they were sitting in a palace! When was the last time you heard anyone say that he was totally satisfied and content? When is the last time you heard a preacher say that about something in the church? When is the last time you said it?

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2. Not many men can say “I am full” or “I have enough”. Oddly enough, one man who did say these words was Esau, one of the most carnal men in the Bible! (Genesis 33:9).

### **I. 4:19 “My God shall supply all your need”**

1. This is one of those great Biblical promises that saints quote almost daily. As a result of the Philippians supplying his needs, Paul assures them that his God (and their’s!) will do the same for them and supply all their need. We supply the need for God’s people and God’s men and God will reciprocate for us.

2. A man needs 4 things:

- a. Salvation (Ephesians 2:4)
- b. Comfort (Genesis 50:20)
- c. Assurance (1 Corinthians 15:38)
- d. Wisdom (Daniel 2:28) (Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on Galatians-Colossians*, page 458).

3. God has promised to supply all our need, not all our greed. You may need a car, but you don’t need a Lincoln Continental. You need a house on earth but not a mansion. You need a job but you don’t have to be a CEO earning seven figures. You need food, but not steak every night. Little is much if God is in it! And what we truly need, God has promised to provide, but the timing and circumstances of that promised provision are entirely up to Him and we have to learn to be patient for the answer but to also be watchful for it, and then be thankful when it does arrive.

4. “A man can get by without health (McCheyne, Brainerd), a man can get by without wealth (Paul, Wesley, Bunyan), a man can get by without education (Billy Bray) and a man can get by without social status (Billy Sunday, Sam Jones, Mel Trotter, Pappy Reveal) but a man cannot get along with Christ (Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer’s Commentary on Galatians-Colossians*, page 459).”

**4:20 Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.**

**4:21 Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you.**

**4:22 All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar’s household.**

**4:23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.**

### **XXIX. Conclusion 4:20-23**

**A. 4:20 is Paul’s closing doxology**

**B. 4:21 “saint”**

1. This includes all the believers in Philippi. We naturally reject any Roman Catholic definition of “sainthood”, that you have to be “canonized” by the church and that only a handful of “approved” people can be elevated to “sainthood”. The Bible knows nothing about such a “sainthood” as it recognizes all born again believers as “saints”.

**C. 4:22 “Caesar’s household”**

1. People were getting saved under the very nose of Nero and Christ had a witness in the imperial palace. Paul’s imprisonment in Rome was paying off with huge dividends. Despite the persecution of Christians under Nero (and other Caesars), there were people getting saved who worked in the palace. We would also believe that there are a sizeable number of Christians serving in Washington and state governments as well. We are indeed everywhere.

2. See similar language in Philippians 1:10.

**Philippians Subject Index, from *The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible: Galatians-Colossians*, pages 327-330**

**AMBITIOUS**

Duty.

To follow after maturity. 3:12-16

To seek to win the prize of God's high calling. 3:7-16

**ANXIETY, ANXIOUS**

Discussed. 4:6-7

How to conquer. Praying in everything 4:6,7

**APOSTLES**

Identified as. Epaphroditus. 2:25

**APPOINT - APPOINTED**

Believer is a. to. Afflictions. 1 :29

**APPROVED - APPROVAL**

Duty. To approve the excellent things of life. 1:9-10

Secured by. Spiritual discernment. 1:9-10

Who gives a.

Believers. Discerning b. 1:9-10

Christ. 1:9-10

**ASHAMED**

How not to be a. Magnifying Christ in one's body. 1:20

**ASSOCIATE MINISTER**

Discussed. 2:19-22

**ASSCRANCE (See CARE - CARING; CHURCH; SECURITY)**

Comes by.

God's keeping power. 1:6 God's supply. 4:17-19

Prayer. 4:6-7

Needed in. Sensing security. 1:6; 1:19

Source. God. He will complete the work He began. 1:6

**BELIEVERS**

Described. As the true circumcision. 3:3

Duty.

To be mature witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ. 1:12-20

To be unashamed & to magnify Christ. 1:20-26

To forget the past. 3:13

To get up, face circumstances, & conquer. 4:11-14

To greet every saint; show no partiality. 4:21-22

To guard oneself. Against four things. 3:1-3

To live as a citizen of heaven. 1:27

To live worthy of the gospel. 1:27

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To mark those who walk as examples. 3:17-21

To press on. 3:1-21

To strive for the faith of the gospel. 1:27

To strive for unity. 1:27

### Life - Walk.

Is to be Christ-wrapped up in Christ. 1:20-24; 3:7-16

The "pressing on" of the believer. 3:1-21

Marks - Characteristics. Discussed. 1:3-30; 2:12-18

Eightfold. 1:3-11

Of a great Christian believer. 1:20-26

Of a mature witness. 1:12-20

Of God's people. 1:3-30

Of mature b. 1:3-11

Some distinctives of. 1:1-2

Motive. To magnify Christ. 1:20

Names - Titles - Identity. Circumcision in the spirit. 3:1-3

Nature. Is a citizen of heaven. 1:27

Position. Citizens of heaven. 3:20-21

### Purpose.

Discussed. 1:20-26

To live is Christ. 1:21

To magnify Christ. 1:20

### Resources.

How to face & conquer circumstances & problems. 4:11-14

Strength in facing circumstances. 4:11-14

## **BISHOP**

Discussed. 1:1

## **BLAMELESS**

Meaning. 2:15

## **BODY, HEAVENLY**

Resurrected - heavenly. To be made just like Christ's b. 3:11

## **BODY, HUMAN**

Duty.

To be a living sacrifice for Christ. 1:20

To magnify Christ in the b. 1:20

## **BOWELS**

Meaning. 1:7-8

## **BROTHERHOOD**

Duty.

To love, care, & support. 1:3 To strive for unity. 1:27

Steps to. Discussed. 4:2-3

## **CALL - CALLED (See MINISTER- MINISTERS)**



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A high c. 3:12-16

Purpose of. To secure a prize. 3:12-16

### **CARNAL - CARNALITY**

Described as. Enemies of the cross. 3:18-19

### **CHRISTIAN (See BELIEVER) CHURCH**

Duty.

To pray by name for the c. 1:4

To revive mission support. 4:10-19

To strive for the faith of the gospel. 1:17

To strive for unity. 1:27

To support preachers: ministers, missionaries, evangelists, teachers. 4:10-19

Marks - Characteristics. Discussed. 1:27-30

Names - Titles - Identity. Circumcision in the spirit. 3:1-3

### **CIRCUMCISION**

Described as.

Believers. 3:3

True c. 3:3

Discussed. 3:3

Spiritual c.

Is the believer. 3:2-3

Is the true c. 3:2-3

Worship God in spirit. 3:3

### **CITIZENSHIP, HEAVENLY**

Duty. To live as a citizen of h. 1:27; 3:20-21

### **COMPASSION**

Result. Unity. 2:1

### **CONCEIT (See PRIDE)**

Deliverance from. Discussed. 2:3,4

Described as. Looking on one's own things. 2:4

Destroys unity. 2:3

### **CONFESS - CONFESSION**

Of Christ.

Every knee shall bow and confess to Christ. 2:9-11

Means to confess His Lordship. 2:9-11

### **CONSOLATION**

Discussed. 2:1

### **CRITICISM - CRITICIZING**

Source of. Murmurings & disputings. 2:14

### **DEACONS**

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Discussed. 1:1

### **DEATH**

Attitude toward.

Desire to depart & be with Christ. 1:21

Gain to the believer. 1:21

### **DEDICATION (See MINISTRY; SERVICE)**

Example of. A man who was not a quitter. 2:25-30

Marks of.

A great believer. 1:20-26

A great church. 1:27-30

A mature witness. 1:12-30

### **DELIVERANCE**

Source. Prayer & the Holy Spirit. 1:19

### **DISCIPLESHIP**

Duty.

To disciple young people. 1: 1

To make disciples. 1:1

### **DISPUTE - DISPUTING**

Meaning. 2:14

### **DIVISION - DIVISIVENESS**

Answer to d. Believers are to help heal. 4:3

Caused by.

Discussed. 2:3-4; 4:2-3

Murmuring & disputing. 2:14

Examples. Two ladies. 4:2-3

### **ELDERS**

Discussed. 1:1

### **ENCOURAGEMENT**

Discussed. 2:1

### **END TIME**

Fact. Every knee shall bow & worship Christ. 2:9-11

### **EPAPHRODITUS**

A man who was not a quitter. 2:25-30

Discussed. 2:25-30

### **ETERNAL LIFE**

Described. As the believer's great aim. 3:12-16

### **EUODIAS**

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Discussed. 4:2-3

**FALSE TEACHERS (See TEACHERS, FALSE)**

**FELLOWSHIP**

Results. Unity. 2:1

Source.

    Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. 1:5

    The Holy Spirit. 2:1

What believers share.

    The f. of Christ's sufferings. 3:10

    The f. of the gospel. 1:5

**FLESH (See CARNAL)**

Duty. To control. By having no confidence in. 3:3

**FORGETTING THE PAST**

Discussed. 3:12-16

**GENTLENESS**

Meaning. 4:5

**GIVING (See STEWARDSHIP)**

**GOD**

Nature. Is to be praised. 4:20

Power of. Keeping power. 1:6

Work of. Supplies all the needs for believers. 4:19

**GOVERNMENT**

Paul's witness reaches to g. 1:13: 4:22

**GRACE**

Fact. Distinctive of believers. 1 :2

**HARMLESS**

Meaning. 2:15

**HOLY**

Meaning. 1:1

**HOLY SPIRIT**

Work of.

    Delivers through trials. 1:19

    To stir fellowship within the church. 2:1

**HOPE**

Of the believer. To stand unashamed before Christ. 1:20

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### **HUMILITY**

Discussed. 2:3-8

### **JESUS CHRIST**

Condescension. Discussed. 2:7;8

Cross. Enemies of. Discussed. 3:18-19

Deity.

Christ emptied Himself. 2:7;8

Discussed. 2:5-11

Is Lord. 2:9-11

Duty. Discussed. 2:5-11

Exalt - Exaltation.

All are to bow & worship. 2:9-11

Humiliation. Discussed. 2:7,8

Nature. Is God. Discussed. 2:5

Origin & nature. Humility. Prime example of. 2:5-8

Return. Is at hand. 4:5

Work. To become man. 2:7

Worship of. As King. Every knee shall bow. 2:9-11

### **JUDGMENT**

How God judges. To bow every knee before Christ. 2:9-11

### **LIFE**

Christ & I. Life is to magnify Christ. 1:20-21

Duty. To work out one's own salvation. 2:12-18

Purpose. What life means to men. 1:2

### **LOVE**

Duty. Must grow more & more. 1:9-10

Results. Unity. 2:1

### **LOWLINESS OF MIND**

Discussed. 2:3

### **MAN**

Purpose.

Discussed. 1:20

What m. lives for. 1:20

State of - Future. Shall bow before Christ as Lord. 2:9-11

### **MATURITY**

Duty.

To press on. 3:1-21

To seek perfection. 3:7-16

Marks of. 1:3-11

### **MIND**

Duty. To think positive thoughts. 4:8-9

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### **MINISTERS**

Call - Called. To serve in second place. 2:19-24

Described as.

Companion in the work of the Lord. 2:25

Fellowsoldier. 2:25

Duty. Not to quit. 2:25-30

Example.

Of not quitting. 2:25-30

Of serving in second place. 2:19-24

Support of. Discussed. 4:10-19

### **MISSIONS**

Duty.. To revive giving to m. 4:10- 19

Support of. Discussed. 4:10-19

### **MODERATION**

Meaning. 4:5

### **MURMUR - MURMURING**

Meaning. 2:14

### **NEEDS - NECESSITIES**

Met - Provided. By Jesus Christ. 4:11-14

### **OFFENSE**

Meaning. 1:9-10

### **PAUL**

Imprisonment. Discussed. 1:12-13

Life of.

Former life. 3:4-6

Personal testimony. 3:4-16

Rejected self-righteousness. 3:4-6

Sought perfection. 3:7-16

Ministry.

A mature witness. 1:12-19

Reached to the very palace of government. 1:13; 4:22

Sufferings of.

Conquered through Christ. 1:12-14

Imprisonment. 1:12-14

Testimony. Discussed. 3:7-16

### **PEACE**

Fact. Distinctive of believers. 1:2

Secret of. Discussed. 4:1-9

Source of.

A gracious gentleness. 4:5

Agreement & unity. 4:2-3

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Positive thinking. 4:8-9  
Prayer. 4:6-7  
Rejoicing. 4:4  
Standing fast. 4:1  
Steps to. Discussed. 4:1-9

### **PERFECTION**

Duty. To be the believer's great aim. 3:12-13  
Essential. To live in God's presence. 3:7-16

### **PERSECUTION**

Duty.  
Not to be terrified by p. Reasons. 1:28-30  
To share in the sufferings of Christ. 3:10  
How to overcome in p.  
Know that God gives His very special presence in p. 3:10  
Knowing how to handle terror. 1:28-30

### **PERSEVERANCE**

Duty.  
To stand fast against persecution. 1:28-30  
To stand fast striving for the gospel. 1:27  
Source.  
Counting all things lost. 3:7-11  
Counting oneself as imperfect. 3:12-16  
Denying self-righteousness. 3:4-6  
Guarding one's self. 3:1-3

### **PHILOSOPHY**

What to think. 4:8-9

### **POSITIVE THINKING (See MIND)**

Discussed. 4:8-9

### **POWER**

Duty.  
To be the believer's great aim. 3:10-11  
To know the p. of Christ & His resurrection. 3:10-11

### **PRAETORIA GUARD**

Of Rome. Discussed. 1:12-14

### **PRAISE**

To God. Discussed. 4:20

### **PRAYER**

Discussed. 4:6-7  
How to pray. To be specific; make definite requests. 4:6-7  
Kinds. Four kinds. 4:6-7

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### Results.

Erases anxiety. 4:6-7

Peace. 4:6-7

### **PRIDE**

Caused by. Selfishness & self- glorying. 2:3-4

Overcome by. Humility. 2:3-4

### **REBUKE, WITHOUT**

Meaning. 2:15

### **REDEMPTION**

Assurance of. God will complete what he began. 1:6

### **REJOICING**

In what. In the Lord. 3:1; 4:4

### **RELIGION, FALSE**

Caused by. Discussed. 3:4-16

Failure of. Discussed. 3:4-16

### **REQUESTS**

Meaning. 4:6-7

### **RESURRECTION**

Described. Heavenly citizenship. 3:20-21

Effects of. Body shall be changed. 3:20-21

Hope for. Believer's aim. 3:10-11

### **REWARDS**

How to secure.

Looking to Christ, the supreme example. 2:9-11

Looking to one's r. 3:20-21

### **RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Meaning of. Christ Himself. Christ, the r. of God. 3:9

Need for. Discussed. 3:9-16

Source of - How to secure. Rejecting self-r. 3:4-6

### **SACRIFICE**

Duty. To s. one's life to bear witness. 2:17-18

### **SAINTS**

Meaning. 1:1

### **SALVATION**

Assurance of God will complete the work He has begun. 1:6

Duty. To work out one's own s. 2:12-18

Source - How one is saved.

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By prayer & the Holy Spirit. 1:19  
By working out one's own s. 2:12-18

### **SANCTIFIED**

Meaning. 1:1

### **SECURITY (See ASSURANCE)**

### **SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Discussed. Height of. 3:4-16

### **SIN - SINS**

Deliverance. By forgetting the past. 3:13-14

### **SINCERE**

Meaning. 1:9-10

### **SPIRITUAL STRUGGLE- WARFARE**

Purpose. To attain to the resurrection. 3:11

### **SPORTS**

Described as.

Running - pressing. 3:14

Walking. 3:16

Exhortations.

To mind the things learned. 3:16

To press for the prize. 3:14

To walk by the rules. 3:16

Reward. Receives the high calling of God. 3:14

### **STAND FAST**

Discussed. 4:1

### **STEWARDSHIP**

Duty.

To give sacrificially. 4:10-19

To meet the pastor's needs. 4:10-19

To revive giving to missions. 4:10-19

### **SUPPLICATION**

Meaning. 4:6-7

### **SYNTYCHE**

Discussed. 4:2-3

### **TEACHERS ,FALSE**

Described. As dogs, evil workers, concision. 3:2

Protection against. Guarding one- self. 3:1-3



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### **TESTIMONY**

Duty.

Not to quit. 2:25-30

To mark good examples. 3:17-21

Examples.

Reasons for following. 3:17-21

Serve in second place. 2:19-22

### **TIMOTHY**

Discussed. 2:22

Served in second place 2:19-22

### **TONGUE**

Fact. Every t. shall confess Christ to be Lord. 2:9-11

### **TRIALS**

How to conquer.

Discussed. 4:11-14

God's part & man's part in conquering. 4:11-14

### **UNASHAMED- UNASHAMEDNESS**

Duty. To have one great hope. To be u. 1:20

### **UNITY**

Duty. To strive for u. 1:27

Source.

Christ - His life in the believer. 2:1-2

Discussed. 2:1-18

Humbling one's self. 2:5-11

Looking to one's rewards. 2:9-11

Standing fast in one's spirit. 1:27

Steps to.

Christ. Letting His life flow in & through us. 2:1-4

Discussed. 2:1-18; 4:2-3

### **WITNESS - WITNESSING**

Duty.

To be a mature witness. 1:12-20

To hold forth the Word of life. 2:16

Example. Paul. A dynamic example in prison. 1:12-19

How to go. Marking out examples. 3:17-19

Marks of. 1:12-20

Where to go. To government officials. 1:13; 4:22

### **YOUNG PEOPLE**

Duty toward young people. To disciple. 1:1

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### Word List in Philippians, with number of times the major words are used

35 Christ,	2 strife	2 fear
22 God	2 stand	2 fast
21 Jesus	2 speak	2 done
15 Lord	2 sick	2 desire
8 rejoice	2 shortly	2 defence
8 gospel	2 service	2 cross
8 brethren	2 salute	2 count
7 mind	2 saints	2 conversation
7 know	2 sacrifice	2 confident
6 joy	2 resurrection	2 concerning
5 good	2 reputation	2 comfort
5 glory	2 preach	2 church
5 death	2 praise	2 careful
4 spirit	2 philippians	2 care
4 man	2 perfect	2 bowels
4 love	2 need	2 body
4 life	2 name	2 blameless
4 flesh	2 men	2 better
4 father	2 mark	2 beloved
4 faith	2 loss	2 attained
4 bonds	2 look	2 apprehended
4 abound	2 longed	2 amen
3 work	2 live	2 affliction
3 walk	2 likeminded	2 abide,
3 trust	2 learned	1 bishops
3 supply	2 laboured	1 Clement
3 state	2 labour	1 concision
3 salvation	2 known	1 conformable
3 righteousness	2 knowledge	1 Epaphroditus
3 prayer	2 hope	1 Euodias
3 peace	2 heaven	1 forgetting
3 law	2 heard	1 furtherance
3 grace	2 hear	1 moderation
3 fellowship	2 greatly	1 persecuting
3 Epaphroditus	2 given	1 Philippians
3 confidence	2 gain	1 requests
2 word	2 furtherance	1 Syntyche
2 true	2 fruit	1 vainglory
2 touching	2 found	1 waxing
2 Timotheus	2 forth	1 yokefellow
2 think	2 form	
2 suffer	2 finally	

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## Pilgrim Way Commentary on Philippians

### About the Author

Dr. John Cereghin was saved on February 9, 1978 at the age of 13 after being raised in the Roman Catholic church. He was saved after listening to a program on missionary shortwave radio station HCJB from Quito, Ecuador. He left the Catholic church in 1983 and joined Maranatha Baptist Church in Elkton, Maryland in 1985. In 1986, she transferred from the University of Maryland to Maryland Baptist Bible College, earning their first doctor's degree in 1995. Dr. Cereghin also earned his Master of Theology degree from Foundations Theological Seminary in 1994.

Dr. Cereghin's ministry background includes working at Radio Station WOEL in Elkton, Maryland (1986-1998), teaching in various capacities at Maryland Baptist Bible College in Elkton, Maryland from 1988-1998, also serving as Dean of Men, Registrar and Academic Dean, and pastoring Queen Anne's Baptist Church, Centreville, Maryland (1989-1990), Charity Baptist Chutch, Mebane, North Carolina (1994-1995) and Grace Baptist Church in Smyrna, Delaware (1998-present).